

Cowboy's Rest Christian Camp & Retreat Center

Summer Staff Handbook

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OUR GOAL AND OPPORTUNITY: whole-hearted love for our Lord in single-minded service to His children

The Goal (of all Christians):

And one of scribes...asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." Mark 12:28-30

God is the goal! When our eyes are finally opened to see the glory of the gospel: that the all-powerful Maker of everything gave what was most precious to redeem His dead, rebellious Creation, our response can only be one of humble amazement and joyful love! We acknowledge that He is worthy of praise with every second of our life and every breath we breathe. But how do we honor Him in the way He deserves?

We value Him as the only **Treasure** worth working, living, and dying for. We structure our day so as to fellowship with Him. We spend our time and energy in seeking to please Him.

We enjoy Him as the only **Fountain** that will satisfy our hearts' thirst for meaning and delight. We count all the fleeting pleasures and accomplishments of this world as worthless compared to gaining Him! And we long for many others to see and savor His glory...

The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:31

When we come to see the completely undeserved riches we've been given by our King, we can't help but long for others to come to know, enjoy, and praise His glory as well! We seek to describe with our words and show with our actions the greatness of His grace and love. As our Savior sacrificed Himself to save us, we find ourselves willing to expend our lives, money, and effort in helping others to find this Treasure. What better way could we love them?

The Unique Opportunity of Camp:

This summer, we've been given the chance to love our King with all our being! We get to love Him with our minds as we learn and apply His Word. We get to love Him by serving others with all our strength. We get to show forth the good news of His love and greatness with all our hearts!

Of course, we can and should be doing these things wherever God places us. But this summer, we have the special chance to do this in a very focused way. For a short season, we get to lay aside the distractions of this world and devote ourselves completely to His kingdom work. We get to be **single-minded ministers of the gospel**. We have the awesome privilege to show and tell many precious children of the glories of our King!!

In reliance on Him, let's do it with all our soul!!

The policies in this handbook have been written to help us press on toward our Goal and make the most of this Opportunity.

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ
Philippians 3:7-8

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win!
1 Cor 9:23-24

STAFF CHARACTERISTICS

Our staff carries the weighty responsibility of modeling true Christian behavior and attitudes while working to ensure the camp functions well. While it is easy to be carried away by the pressure and busyness of camp, we must remember whom we are serving: our gracious and awesome Lord and the precious campers He has brought to us.

Responsible – worthy of responsibility or trust; obligated to answer for actions; answerable to some authority

Reliable - high degree of certainty and predictability

Disciplined – trained to act in accordance with the rules; brought to a state of order

Flexible – capable of being bent without breaking; willing or disposed to yield.

Submissive – obedient; willing to yield to orders or wishes of others

Teachable – open to constructive criticism; ready and willing to be taught

Considerate – showing regard for another's circumstances; looking out for the welfare of others

Punctual – observant of an appointed time

Generous – unselfish; abundantly meeting another's needs (literal meaning: of noble birth)

Enthusiastic – having an intense or eager attitude; full of absorbing, lively interest (literally: possessed by God)

Positive - tending in the direction which naturally leads to progress

"Be joyful always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:19**

STAFF POLICIES

When you applied for this position, your signature on the application indicated your willingness to comply with Cowboy's Rest's "Statement of Doctrine & Christian Lifestyle" which reads...

Doctrinal Basis of Faith

1. We believe in the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, as the only written self-revelation of God. We believe that the sixty-six books of Scripture are inspired by God and are therefore inerrant in the original manuscripts. We hold the Bible as having supreme and final authority in faith and life.
2. We believe in One God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and is true God (100%) and true man (100%).
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in the case of those who reach moral responsibility become sinners in thought, word, and deed.
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood.

6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension to heaven, and in His present life as High Priest and Advocate for us.
7. We believe in "that blessed hope", the personal, premillennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.
9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting, conscious punishment of the lost.
10. We believe in the great commission which our Lord has given to His Church to evangelize the world, and that this evangelization is the great mission of the church.

A Note about Marriage: Holding the Scriptures as our final authority, Cowboy's Rest believes in a biblical view of sexual purity prior to marriage, faithfulness within the context of marriage, and that marriage is defined as a union between one man and one woman.

Christian Lifestyle Within the Camp Community

Christian virtues that are expected to be exhibited by all members of the camp community include humility, honesty, a forgiving spirit, faith, hope and love. The Bible condemns such practices as greed, jealousy, pride, lust, bitterness, uncontrolled anger, prejudice, drunkenness, stealing, profanity, dishonesty, occult practices, illegal activities, sexual sins (including homosexual behavior) and cross-dressing. Camp community members are expected to abstain from such behaviors while exercising their freedoms responsibly within the framework of God's Word. This implies good stewardship of mind, body, time, abilities and funds.

Additional Expectations for Staff Members

The leadership of Cowboy's Rest has chosen to adopt additional rules for both paid and volunteer staff members in order to foster the desired atmosphere at camp. These rules require staff members to abstain from gambling, illegal drugs, marijuana, tobacco, alcoholic beverages and pornography while on camp grounds. Modest dress is mandatory for all staff members at all times.

Staff members are also expected to exercise wisdom in their entertainment choices while residing at the camp. Therefore, none of the following will be allowed without prior permission from the Director of Camps: movies rated 'R', 'NC-17', or unrated; television shows or video games rated 'MA'; or music labeled 'Explicit'.

Finally, bearing in mind the importance of the body of Christ to the Christian walk, all staff members are required to attend Sunday worship at a local church. (There are several Christian churches in the area from which to choose.)

These rules embody foundational principles such as self-control, avoidance of harmful practices, and sensitivity to the heritage and practices of other Christians. While residing and working at Cowboy's Rest Christian Camp and Retreat Center, all staff members are accountable for adhering to these rules.

The policies below have been drafted to further explain the Statement of Responsibilities and avoid confusion. (Items in blue apply specifically to counselors and not other staff.)

STAFF WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Attend** morning staff meetings, weekly staff de-briefings, and any other called staff meetings.
 - a. *Counselors must attend all events with campers unless expressly given time off during that event*
2. Be **punctual** for all meetings, work assignments, and activities.

3. **Communicate** with Camp Director or other supervisors (whether this is to report a problem, update them on a project, or simply check in.)
 4. Treat all tools, machinery, vehicles, and buildings properly, realizing that they belong to the Lord and we must be **good stewards of His property**. (This includes proper usage, reporting problems, maintenance, and putting tools away when finished with them.)
 - a. Maintenance request lists are located in the Pavilion and in the Lodge next to the phone.
 - b. When using camp vehicles for work, never block the path of campers or create a distraction for the campers. Always return work vehicles to their proper parking places.
 - c. *Counselors should not be using camp or personal vehicles when campers are present without permission of their supervisors.*
 5. Exercise common sense in the areas of **personal health & safety**.
 - a. Wear shoes & sunblock: a tenderfooted, sunburnt staffer is less productive than one who is well.
 - b. Get the sleep your body needs. Use some time on the weekends to rest.
 6. **Work duties** cannot be traded without permission of the Camp Director.
 7. No Summer Staff member **may leave the grounds** while on duty unless specifically given permission by the Camp Director.
 - a. During time off, staff members must inform a Senior Staff member of where they are going and when they plan to return before leaving.
 - b. *During a week of camp, counselors should always remain on camp grounds, even during time off, in case a camper need arises.*
 8. Be a **support for Counselors**...they are on the front lines with our campers!
 - a. Cover them in prayer.
 - b. Encourage them throughout the week.
 - c. Talk with them and help them out whenever possible.
- "And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone." I
Thessalonians 5:14*
9. **Be a support** (not a hindrance) to one another.
 - a. Avoid gossip. (Prov. 20:19)
 - b. Resolve differences in a godly manner. (Matt. 18:15, Matt. 5:23-24, Gal. 6:1)
 - c. Do not let the flesh (or your hormones!) interfere with God's working.
 10. **Submit** to the authority of the Camp Director (even if you feel you have a better way).
 11. **Remember** that the body has different parts, but all are equally important. Your job is vital to the success of this camp... and so is everyone else's.

STAFF LIFE

12. Summer Staff members are only allowed to have **guests or friends** visit by special permission and visitation cannot interfere with the camp program. All guests must be cleared with the Camp Director before their arrival, and they will be required to pay for any meals or housing.
 - a. *Counselors are asked not to have guests while counseling, since their focus is to be the campers at all times.*
13. All staff are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in weekly **staff Bible study**.

- a. Counselors are exempt from staff Bible study as well as morning staff meetings, however they are required to attend counselor meetings each morning as well as the debriefing meeting at the end of the week.
14. All staff are expected to attend **camp chapel** at least twice a week, work schedule permitting.
- a. Counselors are expected to attend all events with campers and display an enthusiastic, Christ-like attitude during them.
15. **Mail** – letters can be mailed at Camp Office. All in-coming mail will be brought to the office and distributed by the Program Director.
- a. You may have your family send you letters and small packages. (The postal service cannot deliver large packages to our box, and UPS or FedEx will not travel to the camp.)
16. **Phone**: there will be cell service (AT&T only) available in the Lodge and staff housing areas as well as a short distance down the road from camp.
- a. Staff members are permitted to bring their own cellular phones. However, phones must remain in staff housing and can only be used during “off” times.
 - b. Phones must be turned off when not in use. (We have limited service, and phones left on obstruct service for necessary camp office business calls.)
 - c. If you are not able to bring your own phone and someone needs to contact you, they can call (775) 934-9806, and the office staff will relay the message.
 - d. Counselors should not be using their phones during a week of camp... keep your focus on the campers.
17. **Computer Use** – staff members are permitted to bring their laptop computers to camp; however, computer use must be restricted to “off” times. Personal computers should not be used in the presence of campers.
18. **Internet Use** –
- a. Because of the highly limited data available from our satellite internet provider, staff internet access of any kind will be **available only on weekends**.
 - i. because of our new web-based registration system, it is imperative that the office staff have the data they need. Staff internet use in the past has hampered the office staff’s ability to complete their necessary work online.
 - ii. staff members assigned a camp-related task that requires internet use, will be given access to an office computer for the completion of that task only
 - b. **Wireless**: wireless internet will be available on weekends only; it will be password protected on weekdays.
 - c. Because of limited data, staff members are asked to refrain from streaming audio or video.
 - d. Staff members are asked to use discretion and only visit sites that honor the Lord.
19. **Email** – staff members are permitted to check email on an office computer on the weekends.
20. **Parking** – Staffers are to park their private vehicles only in the areas designated by the Camp Director.
21. **Lost and Found items** must be turned in to the Pavilion. They will become available if not claimed two weeks after the end of the camp during which they were found.
22. Our **electrical power** is provided by diesel generators and can only handle a certain amount of draw. Please turn off all heaters, fans, lights, and other powered items when they are not in use.
- a. Generators may be turned off after “Lights Out”.

23. **Workman's compensation** coverage is in effect during your scheduled work dates. Any health problems of any sort must first be taken to the Camp Nurse before treatment is sought from a doctor.

STAFF HOUSING

Friends of Cowboy's Rest have very generously donated the housing for summer staff, and we expect you to treat your quarters with gratitude and respect. This includes reporting maintenance needs and keeping them tidy.

24. **Housing Contract** – upon moving in, you will be given a housing contract to sign stating that you will respectfully care for your living quarters, the common living area, and all furniture found in both. The contract also states that you agree to be financially responsible for all damage you cause.

- a. **two-day grace period:** during the first two days after moving in, a staff member may report defects already present in housing. These will be recorded in a notebook for reference at check-out.

25. **Care of Staff Housing -**

- a. **daily cleaning schedule:** one staff member in each housing area will be assigned to pick up the common living and kitchen areas (if applicable) at the end of each day. The cleaning schedule and duties will be clearly posted.
- b. **daily inspection:** a senior staff member will inspect staff quarters at curfew to ensure that these duties have been performed. If they have not, the responsible staff member will be located and asked to perform them.
 - i. in the event of conflicting duties (e.g. a staff member is asked to help with night games), staffers can trade days to clean. This should be noted on the schedule.
- c. **weekly cleaning** must be completed at the end of each camp, prior to the debriefing meeting and afternoon meal. One staff member will be assigned to clean each housing area. Expectations will be clearly posted.
- d. **weekly inspection:** performed by one of the senior staff members on the last day of camp to ensure the cleaning objectives have been met. At this time, the senior staffer will also look for and note any damages to housing facilities.
 - i. any deficiencies in cleaning will be brought up at the debriefing meeting, and staff members will be dispatched to rectify them before the afternoon meal
 - ii. any damages will also be brought up at the meeting
 - 1. the Camp Director will investigate the cause and cost of all damages and will penalize responsible staff members
 - a. payment for the damages may be taken from a staff member's next paycheck
 - 2. it is best for you to report any damages you cause immediately
 - iii. Staff will not be dismissed for the weekend until their housing area has passed inspection.
- e. **Check-out Inspection:** we recognize that different staff members will be leaving at different points during the summer. Before an individual leaves...
 - i. a senior staff member will inspect that staffer's living quarters (including common quarters) after he has packed with the staffer and any roommates present. Any damages can be noted, discussed, and then forwarded to the Camp Director.
 - 1. final paychecks will be issued after this inspection has taken place

26. **“Open Hours”**- the Staff Lounge will be open until 30 minutes before Lights Out.

27. **Lights Out:** a lights out time of 11:00pm on work nights and midnight on off nights has been put into place for your benefit. (While serving in the busy atmosphere of camp, it is easy to neglect the sleep your body needs. All staff members will serve our campers better if they are cheerful and well-rested.)

...prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world **Philippians 2:15**

- a. a senior staff member will check staff housing at lights out time to ensure all staff are in bed
- b. exceptions may be made for staff with late-night duties (e.g. campfire, night games), however these duties should be noted on the staff schedule, which will be posted in a prominent place
- c. **Counselors must remain in their cabins with their campers after lights out.**

28. **Gender Boundaries** –

- a. staff members are never to enter the sleeping quarters of the opposite sex
- b. staff members of the opposite sex are never to be alone together in the Staff Lounge. If they find themselves in such a position, one member must leave, or both may exit to an area within view of others

29. **Counselors should not be visiting staff housing during a week of camp.**

30. **Personal Possessions:**

- a. Your personal possessions belong in your cabin or room. Do not leave items such as Bibles, mugs, jackets, etc. in other camp areas (such as the Lodge or Pavilion). They will be taken to the Lost & Found.
- b. Please do not leave toiletries, towels, or other items in the bathhouses. They will be thrown away or put in the Lost & Found by our cleaning staff.

31. **Pranks** – because pranks always escalate and can cause harm to persons and property, pranks carried out by campers or staff will not be tolerated

32. **Food** – no food should ever be taken from the Kitchen without the permission of the Senior Staff.

- a. Staff is permitted to purchase their own food to have here at camp, however, food must be stored in secure areas to avoid attracting mice.
- b. Staff living in the Guest House may utilize the kitchen.
- c. Staff living in the Lodge may store small amounts of food (labeled) in the Leftover Fridge, and utilize the kitchen.
 - i. this privilege may be revoked if the kitchen is not immediately cleaned up after use.

33. **Laundry** – washing machines are located in the Lodge and the Guest House. The staff is asked to provide their own detergent.

- a. We ask that Staff try to do their laundry during the week so that the machines will be available to counselors on the weekends.
 - i. **Counselors should not be doing laundry during the week, since their responsibility is to the campers.**
- b. Laundry schedules will be posted in both laundry rooms.
- c. Do not forget about your laundry! Be prompt and keep the machines available for others.
- d. Clean the lint trap before using the dryers.

STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

34. **Romantic relationships between staff and campers** are strictly prohibited. Any staff member pursuing such a relationship will be terminated.
35. **Friendships with Campers:** While we encourage staff to build friendships with our younger campers, we ask you to exercise caution when campers are close to your age. To avoid questionable situations, do not eat with or fraternize closely with campers of the opposite gender when they are near your age.
36. **Romantic relationships between staff:**
- a. **Keeping in mind our Goal and Opportunity:** Summer camp is a short season of intense ministry and targeted opportunity to share the gospel. All staff should expect to devote their time and energies to this goal and not to the pursuit of a romantic relationship.
 - b. **New romantic relationships between staff members:** as summer staff you will be working closely with members of the opposite gender, and we encourage staff friendships. However, the focus of your short time here must be on your ministry of serving the Lord and the campers He brings. Therefore, summer staff are asked and expected to refrain from beginning new romantic relationships during this time of summer ministry.
 - c. **Existing romantic relationships between staff members:**
 - i. Staff couples who began a romantic relationship prior to the beginning of camp are asked and expected to make this relationship known to Senior Staff. For the protection of their reputations and that of the camp, these staff couples should expect and accept (and even encourage) accountability from the Senior Staff.
 - ii. Staff couples should not draw attention to their relationship through their actions or conversations but should desire that the focus of the campers and other staff be centered on Christ.
- Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.**
C. T. Studd

1. Displays of physical affection by unmarried staff couples are not permitted when campers are present.
 2. Even when campers are not present, staff couples are asked to be considerate of fellow staff. Their relationship should not be a distraction or stumbling block to their co-laborers in ministry and should always be above reproach.
 - iii. Scripture indicates that even married couples should expect to make sacrifices in their relationships for the sake of Christ and His kingdom (Luke 14:26, Luke 18:29-30, 1 Corinthians 7:5,29-31). This short, intense season of summer ministry is an opportunity and privilege to do just that. We hope that the way each of our staff uses his or her time and energy this summer will reflect the Goal and Opportunity we've been given.
- d. All staff (including unmarried couples) must abide by the Gender Boundaries as outlined in the "Staff Housing" section.
37. **Interpersonal Conflict**
- a. **The Goal: God's glory as His children learn to love one another**
 - i. Christians are not immune to conflict. Yes, it is a favorite tactic of the enemy for disrupting kingdom work, but it is also one of God's tools for our growth in fellowship with Him and our brothers!
 - ii. Christians must never respond to one another in outbursts of anger but rather in patience, grace, and understanding.

But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:20-21

- iii. In an intense season of living and working together, conflict becomes even more likely. Anger and bitterness will hinder your spiritual growth and damage your effectiveness as a servant of Christ, so do not leave conflict to fester!

b. Seeking to Honor God in conflict...

i. Humble Heart:

*"...but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."
-Philippians 2:3*

*"If possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with all men."
- Romans 12:18*

1. Pray! Take time to just thank and worship God... be sure He is first in your life, then seek His perspective on the problem. Ask Him to reveal your own heart, to remove any selfishness, and to reveal if you have contributed to the problem in any way (Matthew 7:3). Ask God to keep His glory as your goal, and trust He *will* be honored in this difficulty.
2. Do not assume you understand your brother's thoughts or attitudes in this situation! (You don't! We can see actions and hear words, but only God knows the heart.) While you may feel wronged in a situation, your brother may have had no intentions of causing harm and no idea you feel injured. Much of your struggle may come from false assumptions about what your brother is thinking!
3. Pray for your brother: be earnest in seeking both his good and a compassionate heart toward him.
4. Keep it private. Give your brother the privacy and respect you would like him to give you. "Venting" to a friend only reinforces anger. If you feel that you need wisdom from another Christian, seek out someone who is older, who will genuinely desire the good of both parties and who will give you honest advice (not necessarily taking your side)
5. At this point, the Lord may reveal to you that your brother is not the true problem but rather your own thinking or heart.

ii. Honest Communication:

*"We love because He first loved us. If someone says 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."
- 1 John 4:19-20*

1. Be honest with yourself: ask yourself: "why am I hurt?" "what is it that I want?" Before going to your brother, be able to clearly express the problem in your own mind (writing it down may help). Think about questions you want to ask your brother (see below) and what changes you hope for.
2. Humbly, honestly, and respectfully communicate with your brother:
 - a. find a setting in which you can talk in a relatively private, unhurried manner.
 - b. If you feel it necessary to have an older Christian present, make sure it is someone who will equally support and honestly help both of you.
 - c. Clearly state your concerns. Use "I" statements, not attacks. (e.g. "I've noticed..." or "It hurts my feelings when...")
 - d. Follow up your concerns with questions for clarification that genuinely seek to understand his side of things.
 - e. Genuinely listen: give your brother time to agree or disagree and clarify. Do not argue with his responses, only ask for clarifications.
 - f. Listen and take to heart what he says.

iii. Hope-filled Resolution

1. After discussing the problem, seek a resolution. (This may happen in the same sitting or require some time apart for prayer and then meeting again.)
2. Pray! Place before the Lord what your brother has said. If your brother's perspective is different from your own, ask the Lord to reveal the truth in the situation and show you any changes you need to make to your own attitude
3. Remember the goal is to honor God and restore the relationship, not to prove who was right or force your brother to share your perspective.
4. Together, make a plan to solve the problem - whether you agree that your brother is in the wrong or not, this plan will help both of you

38. Special Case...When your brother is clearly in sin.

- a. **Guiding Scripture:** Matthew 18:15-17
- b. **Context:** Jesus has been discussing childlike humility, not becoming a stumbling block, and how the Good Shepherd will always search for the one lost sheep.
- c. **the Goal:** repentance, reconciliation, and restoration
- d. Steps:
 - i. **Approach your brother in private**
 1. Do this in a spirit of concern and love.
 2. Use the steps above to clearly tell him what you have seen.
 - ii. If he refuses to change: **Approach him with 2 or 3 others**
 1. in our camp setting, this must include at least one Senior Staff Member
 2. have documentation of your brother's offense
 - iii. If he continues to refuse, leave it in the hands of the Camp Director, who will handle dismissal or disciplinary action.

*"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over."
– Matthew 18:15*

STAFF EXAMPLE

39. **Language** – while we consider our staff members to be adults and their choice of language to rest between themselves and the Lord, we also have to consider the sensibilities of our young campers. We also ask you to consider the consciences of your fellow staff members.

Therefore, we ask that staff members abstain from any kind of profane or questionable speech during the course of the summer. (Eph. 4:29)

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29

40. **Music...**

- a. Music played for the campers must be Christian music or music without lyrics, and edifying in nature. Any secular music must be approved by the Program Director or Camp Director before it is played.
- b. Music played in staff quarters must be played at a volume level that is not heard by campers. Also, please consider the conscience of your Christian brother or sister when choosing your music.
- c. We are seeking to promote an environment for our campers free of the distractions provided by technology. Therefore, we ask that Counselors do not have any electronics (games, stereos, iPods, cell phones, laptops, etc.) in their cabins.
 - i. Counselors are welcome to store these items in support staff areas during the week.

41. **"On Duty" Dress Code:** As representatives both of Cowboy's Rest and of Christ, we ask that our staff maintain a neat and unified appearance.

- a. whenever on duty, staff members must be wearing either an issued CR T-shirt or polo shirt along with neat, modest pants or shorts (see description in "Off Time" dress code below)
- b. the first day of camp, all staff members will wear CR polo shirts
 - i. counselors will also wear polo shirts this day but are free to dress in their own clothes the rest of the week

42. **“Off” Time Dress Code:** Staff members are asked to show moderation and modesty at all times no matter what the prevailing fashions may be. Immodest clothing draws attention to the body and detracts from the ministry. No see-through clothing is to be worn.

- a. Bathing Suits: one piece and not revealing.
- b. Girl’s Tops: no spaghetti straps or tube tops, unless with a blouse. No low-cut tops. Bras must be worn. No low-cut armholes.
- c. Shorts: modest length (fingertip length is advisable)
- d. Guys: shirts should be worn at all times except when swimming; pants at waist level (no boxers on display)
- e. Shoes: must be worn at all times except when swimming to protect feet. Be smart: when working outdoors, wear protective footwear!

*Therefore be careful how you walk,
not as unwise men but as wise,
making the most of your time,
because the days are evil.
Ephesians 5:15-16*

TIME OFF

43. **Weekends** – a staff weekend schedule will be posted at the end of each week of camp, indicating staff activities and when meals will be provided.

- a. Staff members are welcomed and encouraged to stay at Cowboy’s Rest over the weekends for rest and fellowship.
- b. If a staff member chooses to depart for the weekend, he must inform the Camp Director of where he is going and when he plans to return.
 - i. all staff members must return for work by the time posted on the weekend schedule.
- c. Remember that Sunday morning church attendance is required. We will arrange transportation if needed.
- d. On certain weekends, we will be hosting groups, and staff will not be permitted to leave.
- e. On non-working weekends, two meals per day will be provided for the staff.
- f. It is recommended that staff members rest and recuperate as much as possible on the weekends so they will be refreshed for the next camp.

Top 12 Ways to Spend Your Free Time

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Spend Time with God | 5. Do Laundry | 9. Play a Board Game |
| 2. Nap! | 6. Take a Hike | 10. Write a Letter |
| 3. Swim | 7. Play an Instrument | 11. Clean Your Room |
| 4. Fish | 8. Read a Book | 12. Bathe (please!) |

VIOLATION OF STAFF POLICIES

Any violations of staff policy will be reported directly to the Camp Director. He will meet with involved parties and witnesses, if necessary, and determine the proper course of action.

SAFETY POLICIES

Safety is of primary importance at Cowboy's Rest. Unsafe behavior or injuries to our campers can jeopardize our entire ministry. Every staff member must see it as part of his responsibility to insure the safety of our campers. We realize that we cannot completely eliminate risks, but the following guidelines can help us to minimize them.

STAFF SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All ground and recreation areas will be kept **free of holes and debris** that could cause injury.
2. All **buildings** will be kept free of loose fittings, debris, and other items causing injury.
3. Grounds will be inspected regularly by the Camp Director to insure safety and eliminate hazards.
4. All **cleaning agents** and other toxic or flammable substances will be stored in areas not accessible to campers.
5. **Fire extinguishers** will be charged and ready for use. Staff must be informed about how and when to use them.
6. Proper **safety equipment** will be worn when using powered equipment, and proper safety training will be given.
7. Furnace rooms and electric heaters must be kept **free of clothes and other debris**.

***Do your part! If you see a safety hazard, fix it, or notify someone who can!
If you are not sure how to safely store or operate an item – ask!***

CAMPER SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. Campers must be **supervised** at all times.
 - a. they must attend all scheduled events
 - b. No boys in the girls' living areas and vice versa. A male and female camper must not go off alone together.
2. Campers must **remain on the camp property** at all times.
 - a. **Boundaries** are: the main gate, the generator barn, the far side of the reservoir, the wagons, and the guest house.
 - b. Campers may be taken out of these boundaries during the day for scheduled activities, but they must not leave on their own.
3. **Be Organized**
 - a. Unsafe behavior is most likely to occur during "holes" in the program. If you are responsible for an element of the program, make sure you are prepared, have your materials ready, and that you start on time.
4. **Be Proactive** - If you see campers with nothing to do, take charge.
 - a. give directions: tell the campers where they are supposed to be and what they should be doing (escort them there if necessary)

- b. find their counselors: especially with younger children, a counselor should be with the campers at all times.
 - c. for older campers during free time: suggest constructive activities they can engage in or (if you are off duty) engage them in conversation, a walk, a game, or another activity
- 5. **Enforce the rules...** they are there for the campers' protection. Lack of strict enforcement or inconsistent enforcement is deemed evidence of negligence in the event of a lawsuit.
- 6. **Communicate** – the Camp Director should immediately be made aware if...
 - a. a camper is consistently engaging in unsafe behavior
 - b. a staff member is acting unsafely and providing a poor example to campers (and refuses to listen when you approach him or her)
 - c. a camper is in possession of fireworks, firearms, alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or dangerous substances
- 7. Campers must **wear shoes** and should be encouraged to wear hats and sunblock

***This means that safety may sometimes need to come before convenience,
fun, or your popularity with the campers.***

WATERFRONT SAFETY

All staff is expected to comply with all of the following rules whenever we are hosting campers and to consistently remind and apply the rules to the campers. During free weekends, the rules will be relaxed (with some exceptions shown in italics below), but all staff are still required to use caution and good sense in the interest of their own safety and that of the equipment. In addition, staff members are asked to put away any waterfront equipment they use during free weekends.

Waterfront Rules

- Swim only when a lifeguard is on duty
- Canoe only when a lifeguard is on duty
- Obey lifeguard Instructions
- Swim only in the designated swimming area
- Canoes must not cross the swimming area lines
- No diving
- If not wearing a green armband, a life jacket must be worn at all times in the water
- Life jackets must be worn by all campers who go canoeing or inner tubing
- Campers canoeing may not exit the canoe except at the island or the beach area where the canoes are kept
- Do not swim under any floating structures
- *Do not sit or hang on lifelines*
- Do not climb on lifeguard stands or towers

Floating Island Rules

- Do not jump on the floating Island
- Do not flip or jump off the floating Island
- Do not swim under the floating Island
- Swimmers without a green armband must keep their lifejacket fastened properly while on the floating island

Iceberg Rules

- All swimmers must wear a lifejacket when on the Iceberg
- *Denim and jewelry including watches must not be worn on the iceberg*
- *Only 3 campers may be on top, one on each level, at a time*
- Do not climb underneath another climber
- Do not climb DOWN
- When sliding, look below before you go
- Only slide on your bottom, feet first
- *Do not slide near ropes*
- Do not swim under the iceberg
- *Do not hang or climb on the support ropes*
- Do not jump off from any point.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Severe Weather

1. The waterfront will be cleared in the following cases...
 - a. lightning strike within 5 miles of camp
 - b. extreme wind (that threatens canoes or floating play structures)
 - c. extreme hail or rain (that obstructs visibility)
2. If the weather warrants, activities will be discontinued, and campers will be gathered to the Pavilion, where they may remain or be dismissed to their cabins.
3. If campers are a long distance from camp during an electrical storm, they should be made to lie in a ditch in an open area.

Fire

Wildfires are common in Nevada during the summers. Typically, they are started by lightning strikes. So, if an electrical storm has recently occurred, keep your eyes open for distant plumes of smoke and report them to at Senior Staff member if seen.

If a fire starts on or near the camp area...

1. Immediately inform a staff member with a radio so that the Camp Director can be notified.
2. No attempt should be made to put out the fire unless judgment to do so is unquestionable and presents no possible danger to the staff member.
3. Campers should NEVER be involved in fighting fires.
4. Lead your campers far enough away from the fire to ensure their safety.
5. If you hear the fire signal sound, this is the cue to evacuate campers to the far side of the reservoir from the fire.
 - a. Non-counseling staff should assist the counselors in moving, calming, and keeping track of the campers.
 - b. Instruct campers to walk in a quiet, orderly manner.
 - c. Do not run unless absolutely necessary.
6. Await further instructions from the Camp Director or a Senior Staff Member.

Remember that the first concern is lives, not property!

Lost Camper Plan

In general, the day-to-day schedule and planned activities will go far in insuring that all campers are accounted for and are safe. However, there are times when it is possible for campers to become lost or separated from the group.

Prevention – Counselors are responsible to see that all of their campers attend each event. (Take a head count at the beginning of each meal and meeting and especially at the conclusion of any nighttime activities.) Non-counseling staff should always be aware of campers' whereabouts and activities. When leading activities, you are responsible to insure that all the campers in your charge remain in the area where the activity is being conducted. Any camper who seems to be sneaking off alone should be questioned.

If a camper becomes lost...

1. The Camp Director should be notified immediately. (Anyone with a radio should be able to contact him.)
2. The Director will direct inquiry as needed to ascertain whereabouts of the individual(s). If they cannot be located within a reasonable time, a search will be dispatched.
3. Search teams will consist of two adult staff members each. The search will be organized by the Director.
4. Should the search prove fruitless, local authorities will be contacted. As soon as the Director is certain that the camper is lost, the parents will be notified.
5. During this time, counselors will be responsible for their campers.

Notification of the remaining campers will be made only as deemed necessary by the Director. At that time, each counselor is asked to organize his or her camp for prayer.

First Aid

In all emergency situations...

1. **Stay calm.**
2. **Survey the Scene.** Be clear and ready to report on the details.
3. **Notify the Medical Staff** or Camp Director.
 - a. do not leave an injured camper alone. Send another person if necessary.
 - b. seek out someone with a radio
 - c. assure the camper that help is on the way
 - i. do not tell the camper what the medical staff will do for him (you don't know for sure)
4. **Crowd Control** (once medical staff arrive, this may be your primary role)
 - a. ensure the safety of the other campers
 - b. keep people calm
 - i. pray with them
 - c. obey all medical staff instructions
5. Under most situations, **DO NOT MOVE THE PERSON.**
6. **Special Situations**
 - a. Shock – have the person lie down or remain lying down; elevate feet and keep warm
 - b. Heavy Bleeding – apply direct pressure; elevate wound above heart
 - c. Burns – if minor, cool with water
 - d. Snake Bite – keep person calm; get help fast; identify snake if possible
 - e. Poisoning – keep person calm; get help fast; identify source of poisoning
 - f. Fractures – do not move; immobilize or support if needed
 - g. Diabetes – get help fast
 - h. Seizures – remove hazards; do not restrain; position on side
 - i. Hyperventilation – start a conversation
 - j. Fainting – cushion fall

CAMPER POLICIES

Our primary purpose at Cowboy's Rest is to serve the Lord... *by serving the campers He brings our way.* You are here for our campers.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of always maintaining a loving and godly rapport with our campers. Even if your job does not require you to frequently interact with campers, we ask that you take the time to get to know them, build relationships, and share God's love with them. Sit by them at meals. Spend some of your freetime with them. Be available: it may be that God plans to use you to bring a precious soul to salvation.

He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward. Matthew 10:41-42

CAMPER PERSONALITIES

Understanding a camper's personality will go a long way in helping you to interact and build a relationship with him or her. Below, you will find a list of personalities that can be challenging to interact with in a camp setting. You will also find some suggestions for building relationships and including children with these personalities in the activities of camp.

| Personality | Quiet and Withdrawn | Noisy, Boisterous, Demanding | Demanding, Clinging |
|------------------------|---|---|--|
| Behavior | easy to ignore because he demands no attention, doesn't want to participate (sometimes a way to get attention), stays by himself, doesn't talk, lack of interest | loud, ridicules others, resists or challenges authority, angered easily, hyper-active | hangs on you, hypochondriac, cries easily, always wants you to sit with him |
| Possible Causes | harsh family – has given up trying to please "risk nothing, lose nothing" (fear of failure) homesickness feels inferior | most often, a lack of loving discipline lack of security way to get attention | pampered, spoiled starved for real love |
| Suggestions | seek him out (ask him to save you a seat, etc.) ask for his help put him in charge of some cabin activity be sure he has a lead role in the skit ask him specifically for his opinion, etc. | reward any good behavior be firm discipline away from others (to avoid his seeking negative attention) don't set him up to be a hero for misbehaving | give positive attention, but spread it out to all your campers expect that some campers in every group will behave this way |

Homesickness - although this is most common with our younger campers, it can also be an issue for older campers, and it can manifest itself in different ways

Suggestions:

Try to include the camper in all activities (have him plan or lead cabin activities)

Encourage other campers to include the homesick camper (play some icebreaker activities, get them talking)

Talk and pray individually with the camper, keep things positive

If the camper has a sibling or friend (child or adult) at camp, he may want to visit with them (a change in cabins may even be a possibility)

Allowing the camper to call home can only be done with permission from the Camp Director and should be a last resort, as it often actually makes the homesickness worse. On rare occasions, we have needed to have parents pick up their homesick campers

COMMUNICATING WITH CAMPERS

1. **Get to know them.**
 - a. Start with small talk about interests, pets, family, etc.
 - b. move on to deeper issues as the camper is ready
2. **Try to find ways to get close to campers.**
 - a. spend time with them, eat with them, have fun with them
3. **Be sensitive.**
4. **Be a good listener.**
 - a. avoid irrelevant responses – using some small part of the conversation to steer it or insert your own ideas
 - b. avoid restrictive responses – trying to make the person mean what you want them to mean
 - i. watch for hesitancy when you give feedback
 - ii. listen until they are satisfied you understood
 - c. avoid evaluative responses – giving an opinion before you’ve really listened to everything
5. **Ask questions.**
 - a. use open questions
 - i. “how did you feel after the game?” rather than “you felt great after the game, didn’t you?”
 - b. with a shy camper, indirect questions may be more comfortable and stimulate more conversation
 - i. “I’d sure like to hear about the new braces.” rather than “How do the new braces feel?”
 - c. avoid double questions, which limit the person to two answers
 - i. e.g. “Do you want coffee or tea?”
 - d. avoid bombarding – using rapid questioning as a weapon
6. **Don’t feel like you have to know all the answers.**
7. **Maintain their respect.**
 - a. Always be a godly example.
 - b. Be consistent; don’t have double standards.
8. **Take time** – including your own free time.
9. **Touch their lives.**
 - a. Be willing to share yours completely with them for the week.
 - b. Really talk with them, not at them.

LEADING CAMPERS TO CHRIST

1. Know the scriptures that explain the facts...
 - a. Fact of sin ... Rom 3:23
 - a. Penalty of sin ... Rom 6:23
 - b. Penalty was paid ... Rom 5:8
 - c. Salvation is free ... Eph. 2:8-9
 - d. Salvation is Christ ... Acts 4:12
 - e. Christ must be accepted ... John 1:12
2. Use an easily understood illustration of the gospel
 - a. “The Great Divide”
 - a. “Do you know where you are going...?”

Decision Night: On Decision Nights, you may end up counseling and praying with one or more campers. These may be campers who have not met before, but ideally they would be ones with whom you've built a relationship throughout the week. Any staff members not counseling campers have the most important job: providing prayer cover. Please join together and pray for those making decision and for those counseling them.

Guidelines for counseling...

1. conduct the counseling somewhere with few distractions (but still in view of others)
 - a. do not counsel member of the opposite sex
2. try to discover the real needs of the camper
 - b. listen well and let him talk until he has explained everything (see communication tips above)
 - c. listen actively: give and ask for feedback
4. help the camper feel accepted by you and by God
5. do not jump in with advice: allow the camper to talk through his needs
 - a. if you try to lead, chances are they will simply follow
6. don't tell stories about your own life, unless you feel that they are completely relevant and helpful
 - a. keep the focus on the camper, not yourself.
7. always use scripture
 - a. let the camper explain what was read in his own words
8. do not coerce the camper: those decisions have little meaning
 - a. if the camper is unwilling to make a decision, back off but continue to pursue the relationship and pray
9. if a camper does make an important decision...
 - a. have him fill out a decision card
 - b. or write the date, your name, and verse down for him, preferably in his Bible
 - c. encourage him to share his decision
10. end in prayer for and with the camper, regardless of the decision
 - a. follow up with a letter to the camper after he goes home

***The point of any counseling situation is to point campers in the right direction:
and that direction is Christ!***

PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE POLICY

Cowboy's Rest recognizes that, although cases of abusive behavior are sadly a growing problem in institutions that deal with children, not all forms of physical contact are abusive and that physical touch is, indeed, a necessary and vital ingredient to the development of emotionally mature and healthy individuals.

The intent of this policy is to delineate what is acceptable physical contact of children by adult staff members who are participating in summer camp and what is not acceptable behavior.

Physical contact between adult staff members and campers that is done in expressions of comfort and approval is permitted. The basic intent of this policy is to guard the camper and staff member from an expression of affection that could be misconstrued as being sexual in orientation while at the same time seeking to provide the love and affirmation that each individual child needs and which is fulfilled at least in part through the vehicle of physical touch with an individual who is emotionally healthy and has the best interests of the child in view.

1. General Guidelines

- a. Always be in view of others when alone with a camper.
- b. Do not allow campers into private staff areas.
- c. Be aware of what you share and ask. Keep personal matters private.

2. Physical Contact for Discipline

- a. No physical punishment is permitted.
- b. When physical restraint of an individual is needed...
 - i. extreme care is to be taken not to harm the child
 - ii. an adult witness should be present
 - iii. parents are to be notified of the incident by the Camp Director

3. Physical Contact for Expressions of Approval or Affirmation

- a. Report suspicious or unusual observations to the Camp Director.
- b. Ask a camper's permission before touching or giving him a hug.
- c. Touching a camper on any part of his body below the shoulders by a staff member is strongly discouraged.
- d. All contact with a camper's sexual organs by any person other than the camp nurse is forbidden upon penalty of dismissal from camp for an infraction. Parents of the child and the appropriate state agency will be notified of any and every violation.
- e. No staff member will be permitted to "counsel" a camper of the opposite sex except in a public area in the presence of one or more adult witnesses. Any incident of an adult staff member meeting alone after dark with a camper of the opposite sex will result in the staff member's dismissal.
- f. No "back rubs" involving members of the opposite sex will be permitted. "Back rubs" by members of the same sex (counselor and camper) must be done in a public area.
- g. No sexual innuendos (verbal or through use of gestures) are permitted by staff members at any time directed toward any person.
- h. When campers are in the bathhouses changing clothes and/or showering, no staff member should be present alone with a camper. (Ideally another adult should be present.)
- i. Adult staff members are not permitted to hold hands with a camper in an affectionate manner. No kissing is permitted between staff and campers. Breach of either standard will result in the staff member's immediate dismissal from camp.

4. Guidelines to be followed in the event of accusation or suspicion of physical and/or sexual abuse by a staff member and and/or an outside party of a child participating in a Cowboy's Rest program

- a. the accused individual(s) will be removed from all contact with campers until all subsequent investigation by camp administrators and state agencies have been completed and satisfactorily cleared the accused person of all guilt
- b. the appropriate state agency will be notified of the incident
- c. parents of the child will be contacted
- d. the camp's attorney will be notified
- e. a press statement will be released as requested

RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE

As an employee or volunteer for an organization regularly working with children, you have a legal obligation to report cases of child abuse and neglect. There are many signs of child abuse and neglect. Some are obvious and

should be reported at once. Other symptoms are not as obvious. But when subtle clues recur or appear in combination with other signs, you should suspect and report it. Common signs of child abuse and neglect are discussed below.

1. Common Signs of Abuse...

- a. reporting injuries by parents
- b. frequent disobedience, delinquent acts, or running away from home
- c. frequently causing trouble or interfering with others
- d. unusual shyness, avoiding other people including children, overanxious to please, failing to protest mistreatment by others
- e. avoiding physical contact with others, especially adults
- f. unwillingness to participate in physical activities
- g. appearing frightened of parent or showing little or no distress at being separated from parents
- h. seeking affection from random adults
- i. self-mutilation, eating disorders, bed-wetting
- j. appearing withdrawn, or engaging in overt fantasy or baby-like behavior
- k. exhibiting poor relationships with other children

2. Signs Specific to Physical Abuse

- a. unusual bruises, welts, or burns
- b. bite marks
- c. injuries often explained by child or parent as accidental ("I fell down the stairs")
- d. wearing long sleeves, knee socks, or other unseasonable clothing which might hide injuries
- e. telling an unlikely story of how an injury occurred, or giving an explanation which does not seem to fit the type or seriousness of the injury

3. Signs Specific to Sexual Abuse

- a. torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- b. unexplained pain or itching in the genital or rectal areas
- c. evidence of venereal disease
- d. frequently engaging in sexually suggestive or promiscuous behavior

4. Signs Specific to Emotional Abuse

- a. unusual shyness, avoiding other people including children, overanxious to please, failing to protest unpleasant treatment by others
- b. unusually adult in actions or underdeveloped for age (e.g. sucks thumb, or rocks constantly)

5. Signs Specific to Neglect

- a. appear tired, listless, and often dirty for days at a time
- b. wears dirty or inappropriate clothes
- c. report being alone for long periods
- d. needs glasses, dental care, or other medical attention

If Abuse Is Suspected...

1. Pray that the Lord will give you wisdom and reveal the truth in the situation.
2. Document specific signs or behaviors that have led you to suspect abuse as well as the dates when they were observed. File any documentation with the camp nurse.
3. Talk with the camper.

- a. Assure child of privacy but not confidentiality. (Explain that if the child or another is being hurt, you may need to get help.)
 - b. Be calm... even if the situation upsets you, don't make the child feel worse.
 - c. Believe the child. It is unusual for children to make up stories of abuse unless they have experienced it.
 - d. Document what facts the child is willing to disclose, but don't interrogate the child to verify them... leave the verifying to professionals.
 - e. Reassure the child that you believe him, that what happened was not his fault, and encourage him that disclosing the abuse was the right thing to do... but don't make promises you can't keep or about things of which you don't know.
4. Talk to the Camp Director about your concerns. He will look into your concerns and contact local authorities if necessary.

CAMPER DISCIPLINE¹

While discipline may seem an issue more relevant to counselors and the Camp Director, any of us may find ourselves in a position of needing to correct camper behaviors.

discipline – *verb* – the use of various methods to bring about positive character qualities in individuals

“Every act of discipline is an opportunity for discipling. It is a step along the way to encouraging and nurturing individuals to become more like Jesus Christ.”

Where to Start: your own outlook...

1. Don't let the first impression become the “forever” impression.
2. Be realistic about the way a camper is now, but keep also in mind what our Lord desires him to become.
3. Treat campers with the respect you wish for them to have for you.
 - a. Say “please” and “thank you” and freely give praise.
4. As much fun as it is to be “buddies” with the campers, keep in mind that you are here primarily to help them grow in their walks with Christ.
 - a. Your discipline will be part of this growth.
 - b. Discipline situations may be difficult for you and the camper, both, but, when done in a spirit of love, they will ultimately benefit your camper...
 - c. ...whereas ignoring his misbehavior for fear of “losing” his friendship will only stunt his growth and ultimately cause him harm.
5. Remember that campers are kids – don't expect them to be able to achieve the standards you set for yourself.
6. **Pray!** Only God can provide the soft heart, gentle strength, and patience it will take to lovingly lead and discipline our campers.
 - a. Spend time in prayer each day, especially for our most difficult campers.



¹ adapted from White, Stan. “The Counselor’s Role in Camper Discipline”. **Christian Camping International.**

COWBOY'S REST 5-STEP APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE

1. Announce the Rules

- a. at the camp level – the rules will be explained to all campers by the Camp Director or Program Director
- b. at the small group level – review the rules as necessary with the campers
 - i. if running a small group activity, be sure to go over the rules ahead of time
 - 1. announce scheduled events and remind campers of the rules (e.g. “remember, lights out is at 10:30... that’s 20 minutes from now... let’s get ready for bed”)
 - ii. don’t “surprise” campers with sudden announcements (“lights out in 2 minutes”) ... give them time to act

2. Address campers in violation of the rules by name

- a. example: “Judy, it’s after lights out. Could you please turn off your flashlight?”)
- b. this avoids confusion about which camper and behavior you are addressing

3. Approach camper(s) in violation

- a. if the camper does not respond to address by name, walk over to the camper, and get at eye level, then remind the camper of what has been asked

4. Isolate camper

- a. if the camper continues to defy your request, isolate him as needed: this may mean...
 - i. asking him to sit out of an activity
 - ii. asking him to sit a short distance away from the rest of the group (but still in sight)
- b. after a short period of isolation, talk with the camper privately, explaining what behaviors you disapprove of and asking if he is ready to rejoin the group
 - i. if the camper replies “yes”, allow him to rejoin the group
 - ii. if he answers “no”, escort him to the Camp Director for further discussion

5. Report Incident to Camp Director

- a. if a camper continues in violation of camp rules or commits a serious infraction, immediately report the issue to the Camp Director for further action

KEY PRINCIPLES OF CAMPER DISCIPLINE

1. No physical punishment is allowed

- A. When physical restraint of an individual is needed...
 - i. extreme care is to be taken not to harm the child
 - ii. an adult witness should be present
 - iii. parents are to be notified of the incident by the Camp Director

2. Expect Obedience – people are much more likely to get cooperation when it is actually expected

3. Make sure the camper understands that he has done something wrong – A misunderstanding about this will greatly hamper your relationship with the camper. Gently help him to realize his misbehavior. One way would be to ask him to help you understand what he did (e.g. “Joey, please explain to me why you hit Jake.”)

4. It is best to discipline campers when they are within “arm’s reach” – the effectiveness of discipline decreases with distance. Whenever possible, discipline campers in private rather than humiliating them in front of

others. Campers will sense you are for them if you do not make them a public spectacle. This goes a long way in respecting the worth and personal dignity of each camper.

5. **When possible, the discipline should bear some relation to the offense.**

6. **Watch Your Words** – Be descriptive, clear, and reasoning rather than commanding, harsh, or sarcastic when explaining a camper’s negative behaviors to him. Be clear and precise about the reasons for discipline. (Generalities will confuse campers.)
- A. Give campers specific ideas on how they can improve.
 - B. Do not discipline by using only nonverbal hints – your campers cannot read your mind, and your hints may be misinterpreted or go unnoticed. Be direct.
 - C. Try to ask and not order – asking invites cooperation
 - D. Try to avoid negative terms – Everyone thrives on praise. Try to state things in a positive light. (e.g. “I appreciate the way Susie is standing in line” rather than “Stop messing around! Get in line!”)
 - E. Remember, *what* you say may be less important than *how* you say it.

7. **Know “Why”**

- A. **the why behind the camper’s behavior** (e.g. is a camper trying to get attention, and could this attention be gained in a positive way?)
 - B. **Why You are Disciplining** – Is your motivation honestly to help this camper and others? Your actions and words should show that you are caring for the campers. Don’t give the campers the impression that you are just “out to get them”.
 - i. Avoid “pet peeve” discipline (disciplining campers just because their behavior bothers you when it is not harmful or against the rules).
 - ii. Avoid disciplining just because a camper’s personality rubs you the wrong way.
 - iii. Be in constant prayer for wisdom and the correct attitude.
 - iv. Demonstrate that your desire is to walk beside the camper, grow closer to him, and to help him overcome negative behavior.
8. **Give campers the benefit of the doubt** – often counselors walk into the tail end of a situation and pinpoint one culprit without knowing the roles of the other participants. Listen to all sides of the story.
9. **Get the campers on your side** – get disruptive campers involved by including them or having them plan activities
10. **Sometimes it is best to ignore minor infractions** – sometimes, when campers are not hurting themselves or others, you may wish to ignore small infractions. Often such behavior is designed to attract attention, and when attention is not received, it will stop.
11. **Be consistent in your discipline** – inconsistency confuses campers, and they soon lose respect for you.
12. **Keep your temper** – once campers realize there are certain things that get to you, they have the upper hand. If something upsets you, immediately stop and ask for the Lord’s help.

APPENDIX A: QUIET TIMES

This section may assist you in discussing personal devotions with campers or even serve as a guide for your own private time with the Lord. Keep in mind that spending time with God is a supernatural activity... one that we are not capable of accomplishing through our own strength. We must always be in prayer that He will give us diligence and an ear to hear what He has to say.

1) **What is a Quiet Time?**

- a) taking time to spend alone with God
- b) part of our relationship with Jesus

2) **Why have a Quiet Time?**

- i) relationships cannot grow without time together. We will only be fulfilled when we have a relationship with God... this is what we were created for! (Mark 12:30)
- b) one way of discovering what God is like
- c) one way to communicate with God. God reveals Himself in His word.
- d) Jesus, the perfect example, spent time alone with God (Luke 5:16, 22:39-41; Matt 14:13, 23; Mark 9:2)
 - i) Jesus invited His followers to come apart for a time of rest with Him (Mark 6:31-32)

3) **How do you have a Quiet Time?**

- a) **schedule** a specific time and place to take time with Christ
 - i) this time should be regular (don't let other activities interfere!). don't feel bad if you miss a day, just ask God to help you keep at it
 - ii) preferably in the morning (to help your perspective the whole day)
 - iii) find a place with few distractions
 - iv) consider this a "date" with God:
 - (1) He loves you and wants you to know Him
- b) **pray**: begin the time by asking Him to allow you to understand His word (Ps. 119:18). Prayer can be done silently in our hearts (Ps. 139:2-4)
- c) **read** the Bible
 - i) God communicates through His Word
 - ii) His Spirit, who lives in all His children, will teach us the truth (I John 2:27)
 - iii) God wants us to seek Him out (Jer. 29:12-14a) along with the treasures we will find in His word (Prov. 2:1-5)
- d) **meditate** on what you read (think it over!) (Ps. 1:2-3)
 - i) Observation: ask "who? what? where? when? why? how?"
 - ii) Interpretation: look for examples to follow, commands to obey, errors to avoid, sins to forsake, promises to claim, new thoughts about God
 - iii) Application: how does this affect me? is there something I need to do or change?
- e) Keep a **journal** and record what you learn as well as your prayers (so you can see how God answered them!). write down important things in your Bible
- f) **pray** some more; tell God about what you learned and ask for His help in applying it.

4) **What should I read?**

- a) Make a **goal**, a schedule, or a plan of what you are going to read (you are much more likely to do the reading if you have a plan)
 - i) your plan could be to read a chapter a day of a certain book (John in the New Testament or Joshua in the Old Testament are good places for beginners to start)
 - ii) **mix it up** a little... read the Old Testament one day and the New Testament the next, then a Psalm the 3rd day
 - iii) if you use a devotional book, read the suggested scripture... if it is just one verse, read the chapter surrounding it

- b) go for “quality time” (with a lot of thought and prayer), not “quantity time” (just a lot of reading)
- c) have a Christian friend with whom you can share what you learn and your walk with God. This person can also help you stay focused and accountable.

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL COUNSELOR INFORMATION

Counselor Schedule

A Typical Day at Camp

6:45-7:00 -- Polar Bear
 7:00 -- Rise and Shine!
 7:15-7:45 -- Dawn Patrol & Counselors' Meeting
 8:00-8:30 -- Breakfast
 8:30-9:00 -- Morning Cabin Devotions
 9:00-9:30 -- Cabin Clean-Up
 9:30-10:30 -- Morning Meeting
 10:45-12:15 -- Morning Rec
 12:30-1:00 -- Lunch
 1:15-3:15 -- Team-Builders
 3:15-3:30 -- Snack!
 3:30-5:30 -- FREE TIME
 6:00-6:30 -- Dinner
 6:30-7:00 -- Evening Rec
 7:00-8:00 -- Evening Meeting
 8:00-9:30 -- Campfire/Night Games
 9:30-10:00 -- Head to Bed
 10:00-10:30 -- Evening Cabin Devotions
 10:30 -- Lights Out

Jr. High Camp:
 2nd Team-builders time
 replaced with Free Time

High School Camp:
 Free Time all afternoon

Lights Out may be later
 for older campers.

Polar Bear: jump in the lake at the crack of dawn and earn points for your team! Counselors are welcome to participate.

Rise and Shine: you are responsible to make sure your campers are awake and on time to breakfast. (If you are staying in the Lodge, you may want to work out a morning shower schedule for your campers.)

Dawn Patrol: optional morning worship and reflection time for campers. Teachings will further enhance the theme of camp. (*Jr. High & High School Camps only*)

Cabin Devotions: This is your chance to really dig into the Word with your campers! Each day you will be given a Scripture passage and some questions or an activity relating to it. Have the kids participate by reading the verses and answering the questions. Try to keep it fun and light-hearted but focused on the truth presented in the reading. Please approach this time with prayer: it can be a very precious and meaningful time with the campers.

Head Count: You are responsible to know the whereabouts of your campers. It's wise to do a head count when you arrive at each new event and to keep an eye out for stragglers.

F.O.B (Flat On Bunk Time): for our youngest campers, Nevada state law requires that they have a time of rest each day. To keep noise and distractions to a minimum, we ask that you keep your campers inside your cabin during this time. Encourage your campers to sleep or rest, but if they would like to, you could allow them to engage in some silent activities (e.g. reading, working on memory verses, drawing, etc.)

Team Builders: may include canoeing, swimming, climbing, the Challenge Course, archery, rifles, or arts and crafts

Free Time: campers have the option of signing up for and participating in a variety of activities such as go-karts, paintball, rifles, and the climbing wall. We encourage counselors to participate alongside their campers (the kids love it when you do!). Counselors may also be able to find a little time for themselves during free time, but we

ask that you keep in mind that you are here to serve the campers. Please make sure your campers are out of trouble. Spend time with them. If they are bored, engage them in some way (take a walk, paddle a canoe, play a game, just sit and talk). *(Jr. High & High School Camps only)*

Campfire: Sometime during the week, your cabin will probably be asked to present a skit, song, or other performance at the campfire. You will have a little time to prepare, but it's wise to plan ahead for this. If you're stuck for ideas, ask our staff. *(more likely at Kids' and Jr. High Camps)*

Night Games: These games are not optional for the campers or counselors for the simple reason that we must keep tabs on the campers in the dark. If you have younger campers who are very tired or campers who are simply unwilling to participate, please contact a staff member. We will try to make arrangements so that you can remain with one group of your campers and a staff member can take charge of the rest.

Bedtime: Get campers through their bedtime routine as quickly as possible. As soon as everyone has returned to the cabin and is ready, have all campers get in their sleeping bags. Take some time to talk about the day. You may spend a little time on the activities (what was their favorite?, etc.), but transition quickly to discussing what was taught. This is a good time to have campers bring up questions or thoughts they may have had. Also take some time to pray. You may want to ask the campers for prayer requests. At the beginning of the week, you might be the only one praying aloud. Later on, try to get some volunteers. You could also have each camper pray for the person next to him.

One-on-One Time: This is especially important with our older campers. We suggest that during their free-time, you set up a specific time and day to meet with each camper. Get a snack, take a walk, and spend some time talking. If necessary, start the conversation with something easy (like a camper's interests or events at camps), but try to steer the conversation toward the week's topics and especially the camper's personal relationship with God. Say a prayer for your camper at the end of your time together.

Personal Time: We can't stress enough how important it is for a counselor to take time for personal devotions and conversation with God – He is the One giving us the strength to do our jobs! The early morning (*before* the Counselor's Meeting) is a very good opportunity to spend some time in the Word and prayer. Make sure that you take time each day to ask the Lord for wisdom and strength. Also, pray for all of your campers individually – as you begin to know their unique personalities and situations, you will be able to pray for them more effectively.

Special Days at Camp

Before Camp...

All counselors are expected to...

- a. familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook.
- b. jot down any questions they may have.

First Day of Camp...

All counselors are expected to...

- c. be present in the cabin as campers arrive
- d. greet all campers warmly, introducing yourself to them and their parents, and helping them with their gear
- e. play "Icebreaker Games" with campers until all campers in your cabin have arrived
- f. give your campers a tour of the facilities
- g. play more icebreakers or join up with others for games until first event (usually dinner)

Super Spirit Day

Super Spirit Day is a fun-filled dress-up day related to the theme of camp. Counselors are also asked and encouraged to join in the fun by dressing up and displaying enthusiasm. If possible, you may want to bring a few simple items to help your campers dress up as well. (Not all of them will have costumes.)

Last Day of Camp...

All counselors are expected to...

- h. Assist campers with sorting and packing all items.
- i. Clean cabin

Useful items for your cabin...

Extras...

- flashlight
- pens & pencils
- large bottle sunscreen
- large bottle bug spray
- mirror
- safety pins
- wrapped candy

Optional Items for Cabin Decoration...

- stickers
- poster board
- construction paper
- markers
- scissors
- tape
- string
- Spirit Day costume materials

Camper Follow-up

By God's grace, we will see Him do wonderful things in the lives of our campers during the week of camper! But the work doesn't stop when the campers leave Cowboy's Rest. For our campers, the real struggle begins when they leave camp and return to the lives they left behind for a week. It is there that they will need encouragements and reminders of what they learned, what they pledged, and what God has done. As a counselor, you can help provide this great need.

Below, you will find some ideas for staying in touch with and encouraging your campers here at camp and long after the summer is over. Use which ever ones are useful for yourself and your campers.

- **Build Relationships at Camp** – make the extra effort to get to know your campers. Even when you're tired, hang out with them, start a conversation.
- **One-on-One Time** – (for older campers) although this may be informal, it usually helps to have campers sign up for half hour slots during free time just to hang out with you. Get some snacks, take a walk, or find a quiet place to sit. Start out with small talk, but eventually bring the conversation around to the week's teachings and what God is doing in the camper's life. Pray with the camper at the end of your time together.
- **Address Exchange** - on the last day of camp, have the campers exchange addresses and emails with each other and you
- **Write a Note** - If you have time, you may be able to write a short note to send home with each of your campers.
- **Send a Post Card** – about a week after you get home, send your campers a short note or postcard, encouraging them and reminding them of the fun as well as the teachings at camp
- **Send Pictures** – if you have some copies of pictures from camp, you may want to send a few to each camper.
- **Talk** – if you see a camper at church or at the grocery store, make it a point to say "hi" and talk for a while if possible

- **Have a “Date”** – set up some time to spend just with your camper. (There may be a special one or two whom you really feel led to keep in contact with.) Go get a milkshake and talk for a while. It may start casual, but try to bring it around to issues you and the camper discussed at camp. Be sure to pray for the camper before you part.
- **Send a Christmas Card** - send each camper a card as an encouragement and reminder of the fun and learning at camp.
- **Organize a “Camp Reunion”** – at the end of the summer, set up a time for all the campers from your group to get together. Have some food, play some games, sing some camp songs, and have a short talk, reminding them of what you learned. Make sure to spend some special time with the campers from your cabin.

APPENDIX C: ICEBREAKERS

When icebreakers might be useful...

- a. campers are arriving the first day of camp and are waiting for events to start (if you are off-duty, go find a counselor and help break the ice with his or her cabin group)
- b. you finish up archery and your kids are supposed to go to the obstacle course next, but the obstacle course group hasn't returned
- c. it's free time, and a bunch of jr. high campers are sitting in the pavilion looking bored

Remember that accidents often occur because kids had nothing structured to do and decided to create their own fun. Also keep in mind that you are here to serve the campers and create a fun environment for them, whether you are on duty or not.

Icebreaker Game 1– Chat Show

Great for groups of strangers, and avoids the dreaded pain of introducing yourself.

Get the group to pair off and take turns in being a chat show host and guest. The chat show host has to find out 3 interesting facts about their guest. Switch the roles and repeat.

Bring everyone back to the big group and ask them to present briefly the 3 facts about their guest to the group.

Maybe go round the group randomly so people are less aware of their turn coming up next and panicking about it. Watch timing on this one as it has a tendency to go on too long if your group likes to chat too much.

Icebreaker Game 2 – Ha Ha

Teams competing lay down side by side on floor or ground. The first person lays back of hand on next persons stomach and that person lays back of hand on the stomach of the next to him and so on. The first person in line is to laugh one HA. The next person in line is to laugh HA HA (two times). The third person is HA HA HA. And so on. Any person that breaks out into a giggle is out of the game and must get up and the hole is filled in. The last one to giggle, wins.

Icebreaker Game 3– Line Up

Ideal for a quick energy boost and finding out a little more about your group. If you've got a bigger group, split them up into smaller groups and see who completes each task quickest.

Have your group ready to form a line in order of....

- Height, from smallest to tallest
- Birth months, from Jan through to December
- Distance they travel to work, from close to far
- Anything else you think up!

To make it more of a challenge, get the group to do this silently, using sign language or other alternative communication.

Icebreaker Game 4 – Who am I?

Pre-make tags with each tag having one famous person on it, mainly divas that everyone would know. These tags will be placed on the back of each guest as they arrive. This is done without them knowing who they are. They are to go around the room asking questions as to who they might be. Questions like “am I a singer?” They can only ask one question and make only one guess as to Who they are with each person that they talk to, then they have to move on to another person. They can come visit previous players once they've visited another player.

Icebreaker Game 5 – Ape, Man, Girl

This is a variation of the “rock, paper, scissors” game. Have people pair off. Then, when the signal is given each person strikes a pose like an ape, man, or girl. Be sure to demonstrate what each looks like ahead of time (and you can decide that!). The ape beats the girl, man beats the ape, the girl gets the man. Eliminate the losers and pair the winners until you get a champion.

Variation:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Elf | Squatting down and imitate pointed ears by holding two fingers up by your ears (similar to making bunny ears). Make "Eeeking" noises while doing this. |
| Giant | Standing on tip toe, arms raised in frightening posture making growling / roaring sounds |
| Wizard | Standing normally but with arms outstretched as if casting a spell. Make appropriate spell casting noises. |

As with Rock-Paper-Scissors, each character/icon can win against one character or lose against the other. In this case, if wanted, individuals can make the appropriate actions for winning or losing.

Winner

Action/s:

Elves shoot Wizards: Elves win

Elves pretend to shoot an arrow, Wizards make dramatic gestures as though struck in the heart.

Wizards frazzle Giants: Wizards win

Giants pretend to shrink.

Giants squash Elves: Giants win

Giants pretend they are squishing something small.

Icebreaker Game 6 – Lightsabers

Have your kids pick a partner (preferably one they do not know, and they will be needed to find out that persons name), then have them take their hands and hook them pointing at each other with the index finger. After they have done so tell them that the object of the game is to poke each other (as if you have a light saber : note in appropriate places) once you have been poked you sit down and the partner that's left finds a new partner and so forth until it comes down to two and one will be the ultimate champion... its quite a fun icebreaker and lets your kids get to know one another.

Icebreaker Game 7 – Clump

Everybody mingles, constantly moving until the leader shouts out a number. All players must then try to get into groups of that number, any group/s that don't succeed are out.

Variation: Players find others who have things in common, such as same shoe size.

Icebreaker Game 8 – Silly Scrumple

One person is selected as the leader (who remains out of the game) all players then get into a circle and each gets given a piece of paper to write a silly thing to do on with out letting others see what they have written (e.g. Bark like a dog or sing a song). Each player then crumples their paper up so that the contents cannot be seen. On the leaders command players then start to pass the pieces of paper around the circle waiting for the command to stop. When this happens two people are chosen to carry out the instructions on the pieces of paper they have, without laughing. Those who laugh are out. Repeat until only two people left.