



FOCUS TRAINING 6

Publication series prepared specifically for training summer camp volunteers.

DISCIPLINE

THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline is to teach. Sometimes punishment must be used to help in the teaching process, but punishment should never be used as an end in itself.

Every camper is at camp because of their own free will (or at least that of the parent.) Therefore, our system will only work when there is an atmosphere of trust. We must be able to trust the campers and they must be able to trust us.

Discipline is used to help maintain that atmosphere of trust. It should always be camper-centered. You must ask the question, "Is this going to help the camper?"

Sometimes a camper will need to be reassigned to another counselor. This will usually happen when the trust between the two totally breaks down or the counselor loses their objectivity.

Campers who are unwilling to cooperate with any authority within the camp will probably be sent home. This is a last resort and will be exercised only after a variety of approaches have been tried. We do not bring campers here to send them home, we bring them here to help them.



SAFETY NETS

The purpose of a chain of authority is to create a safety net system that benefits both the counselor and the camper. It helps ensure that good decisions are made.

Counselor. Problem campers that do not respond to simple disciplinary measures should be referred to the Dean.

Dean. When a camper is not responding to the systems in place, the Dean should discuss the situation with the Camp Manager. It requires a joint decision of the Dean and the Camp Manager to send a camper home.

Camp Manager. Since the Camp Manager is an employee of RCC and is accountable to the Board of Directors, all serious disciplinary issues should be discussed with him. He may have resources not available to the volunteer program worker.

FROM THE CAMPER'S PERSPECTIVE

"Discipline with love: Remember, I'm not as old as you and I will make mistakes, sometimes not understanding what I've done. Give me reasons for the discipline. When you correct me, be reasonable, gentle and firm. Losing your cool results in you losing credibility. If you grab, shake, or hit me, you'll probably hear from the authorities and my father's lawyer."

*"A Survival Guide for Retreat Counselors"
By: Stan White*



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GENERAL CAMP RULES

The campers receive a copy of the camp rules in their confirmation information. The parents also sign on the registration form that they will abide by the rules.

Since our rules are not extensive, they should be interpreted in spirit, rather than to the letter. Do not ignore any of the rules because you do not see the point in one. Our rules come from over 75 years of experience and tradition to create a good atmosphere and encourage the cooperation of the camper.

- Our focus is Jesus Christ developing a growing, personal relationship with Him.
- Christian conduct and character is expected at all times and campers will be expected to abide by the schedule.
- Dress should be of a modest nature. No extremes in dress is permitted including swimsuits and clothing should not contain any inappropriate words or slogans.
- Medication must be in their original containers, clearly marked and turned in at check-in to the EMT to be dispensed. All sicknesses or injuries must be reported to the EMT.
- To completely enjoy the camp experience, cell phones, radios, MP3s, game systems, magazines, novels, pocket knives, prank items, tobacco, and alcohol are not allowed.
- Campers are encouraged to participate in the program and homesickness is to be handled with care and compassion.
- If a camper desires baptism, the Dean will contact the camper's parents for permission.
- No outside food is allowed.
- Campers should remain at camp for the full program. Cars driven to the camp will be parked and keys turned into the Camp Office.
- Campers may receive mail while at camp as well as send out mail. They should bring their own mail supplies.

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

1. Do not discipline when angry.
2. Do not seek vengeance.
3. Do not strike, hit, or use abusive language.
4. Punishment must always be tempered with love, grace and forgiveness.
5. Remember, this is not your child; it is somebody else's child.
6. When possible, have at least two adults present in disciplinary sessions.
7. Ask for help if you do not feel you can control your emotions.
8. Pray before discipline.
9. Leaders should hold each other accountable. If you think a leader is crossing the line in discipline, report it to the Camp Manager.
10. Remember, abusive actions can lead to your being sued, the camp being sued, your being arrested or your being banned from ever working with children.

Resource: Child Abuse: What You Can Do About It By: Angel R. Carl

COUNSELOR TO COUNSELOR ABUSE

It is possible for counselors to be abusive to each other. This is extremely wrong and should not be tolerated. If you believe abuse is taking place, please report it immediately to the Dean or the Camp Manager.

The following are some of the areas where abuse could occur:

- One leader degrading another leader.
- Inappropriately touching other leaders.
- Deliberately speaking ill of another leader in front of campers.
- Regularly interfering with another leader's area of responsibility.
- Being excessively bossy.



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PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION GUIDELINES

CAMPER TO CAMPER

What not to allow:

- Hugging and kissing
- Lap sitting
- Cuddling during worship times
- Inappropriately placed hands or arms
- Any action with sexual overtones

Casual hand holding may be acceptable in some situations. Be careful about allowing campers too much time together in dark, hidden places.

CAMPER TO COUNSELOR

All of the above plus...

- Prolonged hand holding
- Any action that may be perceived as inappropriate
- There should be absolutely no amorous activity between a counselor and a camper.
- Guard against any accusations of improper action toward a camper.

COUNSELOR TO COUNSELOR

Unmarried counselors should abide by the same guidelines as the campers. Remember, you are here to be a role model.

Married couples should model good, healthy relationships. This might include an occasional short kiss, hug or an arm around the shoulder. Amorous actions such as lap sitting should be avoided.

INS AND OUTS OF DISCIPLINE

INS

- Praying for and with the camper
- Private counseling
- A firm voice
- Keeping disruptive items for safe keeping, but seeing that they are returned at the end of the program
- Not allowing food in the dorms
- The requiring of making beds and cleaning dorms
- Moderate work duties for repeat offenders, such as sweeping, policing the grounds or working with the Camp Staff
- Non-abusive, non-contact punishments administered in love
- Writing themselves or others a letter
- Making restitution, such as removing graffiti, giving an apology, etc
- Consulting with the Dean in difficult cases
- Trying to find the cause of the behavior

OUTS

- Any punishment delivered in anger
- Any form of corporal punishment
- The deliberate berating of a camper in front of other campers
- Any form of physical contact except when protecting the safety of campers
- Any form of punishment that will seem obviously out of line such as "wedgies," "swirlies," or rattail fighting.
- The restricting of scheduled activities, such as swimming, without the permission of the Dean and never for more than one period.
- Forced Bible memory work
- Verbal abuse
- Using profane or foul language
- Forms of punishment which directly benefit the counselor

ON TOUCHING

- Hugs are good when done for affirmation and are not of a prolonged duration.
- Prolonged hand holding with adolescent campers of the opposite sex is discouraged except in times of prayer and counseling sessions.
- Kissing campers is never allowed.
- Touching around the private parts should only be medically done by the EMT.
- Avoid actions which might be easily misunderstood either by the camper or by witnesses.
- Spread your attention around so you will not be thought of by the campers as having favorites.



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APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION CHART

Infraction	Action
Fighting	Stop the fight, remove the offenders to a private location, try to resolve the issue, try to get apologies and forgiveness, give a punishment that fits the offense, log the incident, report it to the administration for additional action.
Foul Language	Immediate verbal reprimand, discuss the inappropriateness of the language in private with the offender, assure future cooperation.
Bullying	Separate the offender, discuss the actions with the camper, be alert to a low self-esteem, insure future cooperation.
Inappropriate Clothing	Discuss it with the camper in private, require the clothing be changed, seek voluntary cooperation.
Disruptive Behavior	If it cannot be controlled by subtle action or private consultation then requesting cooperation in a group setting may be appropriate. If cooperation cannot be gained then an appropriate punishment should be given. Note it on the Incident Report.
Public Display of Affection	As privately as possible, request immediate change. If the action repeats then a consultation with the couple is needed, probably by an administrator.
Smoking, Alcohol, Sexual Misconduct, Drugs, Stealing	Report to the Dean and Camp Manager. They will administer the appropriate discipline. May be grounds for immediate dismissal.

LOGGING YOUR ACTIONS

All disciplinary actions should be logged on an Accident/Incident Report. This is very important as issues often come up following the camp session. This record is critical to solving problems with parents and churches. Please be specific when logging information. Accident/Incident Reports can be found in the Dean's Notebook.