



Berkowitz Gan Israel Staff & Counselor Guidelines for CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Affectionate touch and the warm feelings it brings is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. However, staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space (i.e., not everyone wants to be hugged). Our camp encourages appropriate touch; however, at the same time prohibits inappropriate touch or other means of sexually exploiting children. Inappropriate touching of campers, whether of corporal punishment (striking, biting, kicking, squeezing), or of a sexual nature, will not be tolerated and shall be grounds for immediate dismissal. In a camp setting, physical abuse is most likely to happen when a counselor is disciplining a rebellious or unruly camper. Anything done to inflict pain while disciplining a camper is considered child abuse.

Guidelines for Camper-Counselor Contact

- Never against a child's will (unless in the case of clear and present danger of the child)
- Never in a way which causes a child's discomfort, whether that discomfort is expressed verbally or nonverbally
- Always in the company of other adults
- Never in a place on a child's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only with supervision from another adult
- Never when it would have the effect of over-stimulating the child

DISCIPLINE

Never allow discipline to include depriving a camper of sleep, food, or restroom privileges, placing a camper alone without supervision, or subjecting a camper to ridicule, shaming, threat, corporal punishment (striking, biting, kicking, squeezing), washing out the mouth, or physical exercise or restraint.

Guidelines for the Discipline of Children

- Counselors may NOT, under any circumstances, hit a child
- Counselors may not use abusive or derogatory language with campers
- A staff member who encounters a particularly difficult child will seek the assistance of supervisory or administrative staff
- Counselors need to ask for help
- In all dealings with campers, counselors should strive to respond as opposed to react to children
- Counselors should immediately intervene if they witness another counselor, instructor or specialist displaying inappropriate behavior, disciplinary action or contact with a camper

Never Scream – When a staff member screams, it is exciting. Some kids want to see how excited, nervous and angry they can get their counselor. Also, it shows a lack of control. Many times when a staff member screams, the kid's don't even hear what she's saying, they just hear screaming and yelling. Keeping a calm, low voice, demonstrates that you are in total control of the situation and of yourself. It shows that what your saying is being thought about, not just yelled in rage.

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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

We cannot be too careful in the area of sexual abuse. Even the appearance of wrong or a false allegation can cause irreparable damage to the reputation of the accused staff member and the camp. Therefore, all staff members must be very cautious in order to avoid doing anything that could be interpreted as sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced, whether or not the child has consented.

Guidelines for Staff to Prevent Sexual Abuse

- There will be double coverage of campers by adults during changing times
- Younger children should be encouraged to change their own clothes as much as possible
- Counselors will set limits with children who 'cling' or hang on them
- Counselors will not give back rubs unless another adult is present, and then only with clothes on
- Tickling or teasing a camper to the point where that camper is out of control is unacceptable
- Whatever is done with campers should be done in broad daylight, with company

GENERAL

If a staff member hears a camper speaking disrespectfully or ridiculing another camper or staff members lifestyle; or just speaking badly about any person, race or culture, the camper should be told that, "We don't speak not nicely about others in this camp. In Gan Israel everyone is treated fairly and with respect."

The physical size and strength of staff members necessitates that you use discretion and restraint in all physical contact activities with campers. Games that encourage intense competitive activities with physical contact that potentially could cause injury must be eliminated or supervised very closely by nonparticipating staff members.

Staff members should never discuss their own personal lives with the campers. Staff members may not give their personal contact information to campers.