

CAMP ADMINISTRATION 101

BULLYING



Bullying can happen anywhere and the dynamics can be complex. In order to put preventative measures in place for bullying or to tackle incidents effectively it is important you and your staff know what to look out for that will indicate clear signs that bullying may be occurring. Bullying can occur in many forms such as:

Physically such as hitting or pushing. Physical bullying is the easiest to recognize but can still go unnoticed if it happens behind closed doors, like in a restroom area, bunk, or storage area that a camper may have access to. Pay attention when campers put their hands on each other and have rules in place to prevent it.

Verbally such as name calling and harassing. Verbal bullying can be easy to detect as long as staff is paying attention to how their campers are talking to each other. If they don't overhear the verbal bullying or if it is not reported to them, they may still be able to notice it happened in the reaction or body language their camper is displaying. If a camper is not acting their normal self, make sure to address it and not ignore it.

Within relationships that include rumors and excluding. This type of bullying is the hardest to detect and generally may take a long time to get the root cause of the camper's issues with each other. With the older kids also on phones and social media this could go far beyond camp so it is important to communicate these issues with parents so it can get resolved and not disrupt camp. If you hear a rumor or see a group become argumentative and dysfunctional shut it down immediately and continue on to find out the cause of their problems before it gets worse.



**WHEN YOU DETECT
BULLYING, IT IS
IMPORTANT YOU ACT
IMMEDIATELY AND TAKE
THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

- ✓ Separate the campers so the bullying stops
- ✓ Remove them from the rest of the group
- ✓ Respond firmly and appropriately
- ✓ Make sure everyone is safe and be calm
- ✓ Reaffirm the behavior isn't tolerated
- ✓ Assist the students separately to work it out
- ✓ Give praise and show appreciation for better behavior
- ✓ Report the incident to parents and discipline if it continues
- ✓ Follow up and check in

AVOID DOING THE FOLLOWING:

- ✓ Don't be aggressive
- ✓ Don't give a lecture
- ✓ Don't ignore it
- ✓ Don't ask them to work it out themselves
- ✓ Don't try to handle in a group setting in front of other kids that are not involved.



Bullying needs to be taken seriously as severe incidents can have long term effects on the child. You may run into many more minor incidents that may not reach the level of bullying at the start, but if they are not addressed and resolved it can quickly become more harmful to the child so pay attention, especially if it's recurring. Creating an inclusive camp environment, educating staff and parents, communicating properly, and being quick to respond to incidents will greatly reduce bullying and ensure you have an incident free camp.

Before you have a bullying incident within your camp you can take preventative measures to curtail it from ever happening such as:

- ✓ Discuss it with campers to start each week, especially if you are having issues or get new campers each week.
- ✓ Have rules and policies in place for bullying and ensure parents and kids know it is not tolerated.
- ✓ Have a reporting process in place for campers and parents.
- ✓ Use social and emotional learning activities to keep the campers engaged with each other.
- ✓ Incorporate teambuilding activities within each group.
- ✓ Establish a culture of inclusion for all campers.
- ✓ Communicate with parents on policies, incidents, and any action that was taken.
- ✓ Train staff properly on how to handle bullying and the role they play as a youth mentor.





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