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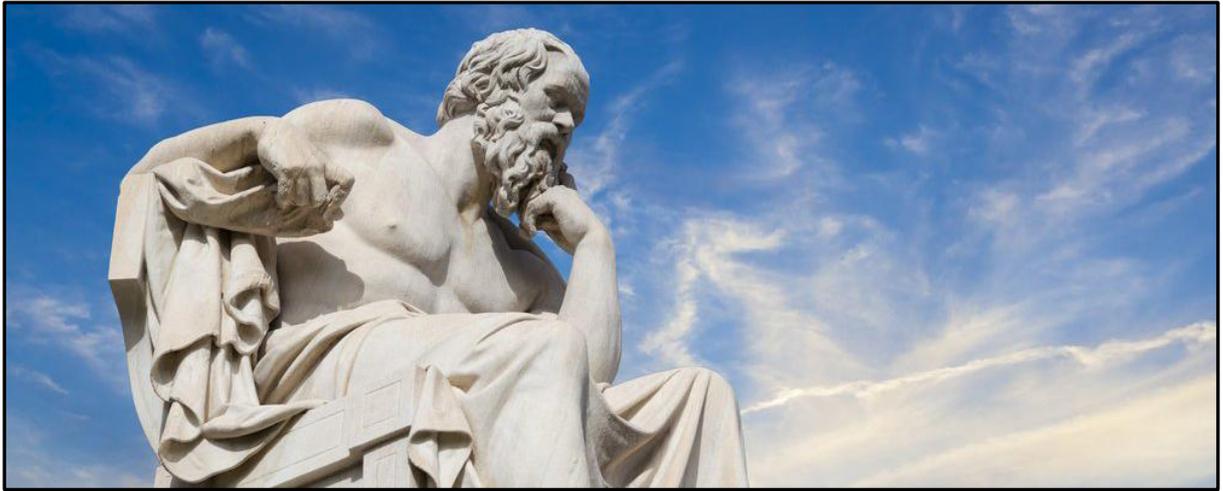
Welcome!



This handbook contains all the information you will need regarding our philosophy, policies and procedures, in addition to all the relevant information you will need to become the epic Camp Leader that you were born to be!

This guide is to be used as a reference throughout the summer. From games ideas to emergency procedures, it's all in here. So please do not lose it and bring it with you to our training workshops!

We are excited you have joined the Country House Camp family!



Our Philosophy

At Country House Camp we create an environment that is safe and fun for children from all over the world to make friends, challenge themselves, learn new skills, and to become more independent, accepting and responsible.

Our philosophy and programming are rooted in the core values of:

**Acceptance, Independence,
Responsibility & Teamwork**

Acceptance

Our campers come from all over the world. While numerous cultures are represented, the spoken language at camp is English; and the common thread among Country House campers is acceptance, tolerance and caring for people of all backgrounds.



Please provide 3 examples of how you will be able to put this into practice this summer.

Independence

For most children, camp is the first time they become fully independent of their families. They learn to take measured risks, make their own decisions, and live independently. The skills they learn at camp will help them succeed throughout their lives.



Please provide 3 examples of how you will be able to put this into practice this summer.

Responsibility

Our campers learn the value of their contributions. Whether it's cleaning up their room or a football match, campers learn they have a role and that others depend on them to perform this role to the best of their abilities.



Please provide 3 examples of how you will be able to put this into practice this summer.

Teamwork

Campers learn the importance of working as a team, not only on the fields but in the bedrooms as well. Teamwork involves learning how to share and be respectful to one another. Once children understand this, it will apply to all aspects of their life.

Please provide 3 examples of how you will be able to put this into practice this summer.



Nowadays there are multiple activities which amuse children during the summer. However, residential summer camps offer a totally different experience: a unique opportunity for personal growth and development.

Daily Schedule

Every day at Country House Camp is exciting. Campers have 2 English Sessions a day, 2 Activity Periods and a daily Evening Programme. In addition, the children will go on 3 excursions per two week session: one to central London, one to the nearby countryside and one night of camping.

Daily Schedule

08:15am - Rise and Shine!

08:30am – Breakfast & Clean Up

09:30am – Morning Gathering & Sign Ups

09:40am - English Session

11:10am – Snack Time

11:20am - Activity Period (3 day cycle)

12:40pm - Lunch

01:40pm - Rest Hour

02:20pm - English Workshop

03:50pm - Activity Period (Elective)

05:00pm - Snack Time

05:10pm - Relax & Shower

06:40pm - Supper

07:40pm - Evening Programme

08.40pm – Eagle’s Den

08:50pm – Evening Gathering

09:00pm - Rose Thorn Bud

09:30pm - Lights Out!



You will get 1 Activity Period off every day, as well as 2 nights off a week (after putting to bed), 1 day off a week, and 1 day off before each two week session. There will be a **Rota & Days Off** with more details.

Camp is hard work! But it's also incredibly fun and rewarding. On the days you are on duty you need to be ready by 8am. When off duty, you will finish at 9.30pm, when on duty, you will finish at 11pm. Just remember that camp is created for children to have fun yet there's no reason why you shouldn't have a great time too. You can do a great job looking after children AND have lots of fun in the process!



Camp is the toughest job you will ever love!



We are a small camp and are always open to new ideas and different ways of doing things. Many summer camp traditions around the world were brought by Camp Leaders; that's how certain songs became 'camp songs', certain games became 'camp games', certain rituals became traditions. That is the beauty of camp - we are all part of the magic.

Morning meeting & Evening Gathering

This is a daily tradition that marks the beginning and end of each day. The Morning meeting takes place after zoom. It's when we make our announcements for the day and children sign up for their elective. You will announce what elective you are offering that day and take the names of the children that are interested.

Evening Gathering takes place just before children go to bed and gives us the opportunity to praise campers who did particularly well that day in the form of shout outs, and to inform campers about anything special happening the next day.

Evening Program

Evening programs bring the whole camp together. They are fun and crazy - they're what camp is all about! You will be asked to lead some evening programs throughout the summer. 2 camp leaders are in charge of each night.

Rose Thorn Bud (RTB)

After the evening program, campers get ready for bed and you will lead Rose Thorn Bud (RTB) with your group. This is a very important time of night for both you and your campers. It's a great way for you to bond with them and understand what activities / aspects of camp they are happy or unhappy with. We will often ask you about your campers' RTB and we expect you to know them.

Opening Campfire

The first night of each session is an all-camp campfire, involving everyone in camp. You will be responsible for organising a skit with your group of children or something similar. Every staff member has a chance to add their special talent or craziness to these unforgettable evenings.

Morning zoom

These are 5 – 10 min ENERGISERS, before the morning meeting, for everyone! 9am sharp, even if half asleep! Taken by 2 camp leaders, they can be anything from a crazy song, skit, game, musical statues or a workout, dance... you name it!

Special Events – Staff show

The most memorable experiences throughout the summer often occur when the staff joins in to focus their energy towards a special event. Sometimes it may be a Performing Arts production or our famous Staff Show, normally on the 3rd or 4th night. These special efforts are not only highlights for campers, but important for the staff too. Seeing each other doing crazy silly things is what brings us closer together.

Songs

Camp wouldn't be camp without them. They are the basis of the spirit that makes camp so memorable. We sing at lunch, supper, campfires, during activities; in fact, just about any time of day is good for a song. Songs are a powerful tool to help campers who are missing home, create a mood and have fun. You are not expected to have a great voice or be a Hollywood performer, but you are expected to lead songs while at camp. Relax and have fun, there is no need to be self-conscious, remember: you're at camp!!

Know thy camper!



**Questions you must be able to answer
about every camper in your session!**

TOP TEN

What is their name / nickname?

What are they most looking forward to at camp?

What school year are they in and how old are they?

Where do they live?

Do they have friends from school or home at camp?

How many brothers/sisters?

What extra-curricular activities do they do at school?

Do they have any pets?

Favourite musical group/singer?

Favourite movie?

Know all the important facts about your campers? Excellent. Here are some more!

1. If you were invisible, where would you go?
2. What isn't your favourite colour?
3. What is the craziest thing you've ever done?
4. If you could rob any store, which store would it be?
5. What sound or noise do you love?
6. If you could have any super power, what would it be?
7. If toast always lands butter-side down, and cats always land on their feet, what happens if you strap toast on the back of a cat and drop it?
8. Describe yourself in 3 words
9. If your house was on fire and you could go back and get one thing, what would it be?
10. If you could ask any living or dead person 1 question, who would you ask and what?.
11. Do you think socks should match?
12. What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
13. If you were to write a book about yourself, what would the title be?
14. If you could trade lives with anyone for a day who would it be and why?
15. What is your favourite movie quote?
16. If you could live in any decade what would it be?
17. If you could buy yourself anything what would it be?
18. If I gave you a plane ticket anywhere in the World, where would you go?
19. What is the best thing you've ever purchased?
20. What's your dream job?
21. If you were famous, what would you be famous for?
22. What type of food makes you want to be sick?!
23. If you could have dinner with one person alive or dead who would it be?
24. If you could commit any crime and get away with it, what would you chose?

25. If you could open any business, what would it be?
26. If you could hear what someone is thinking for a day, who would you choose?
27. What does electricity taste like?
28. If you could go to any concert, alive or dead, which would you most like to see?
29. Which room would you rather be stuck in – a room full of spiders or mice?
30. Would you rather be able to lie without being caught or always be able to tell when someone is lying?
31. Would you rather be able to eat anything and any quantity of food with no negative health effects, or be refreshed and well rested after only three hours of sleep?
32. What is your favourite word?
33. Would you rather speak all the languages in the world or be able to transport yourself to anywhere at the click of your fingers?

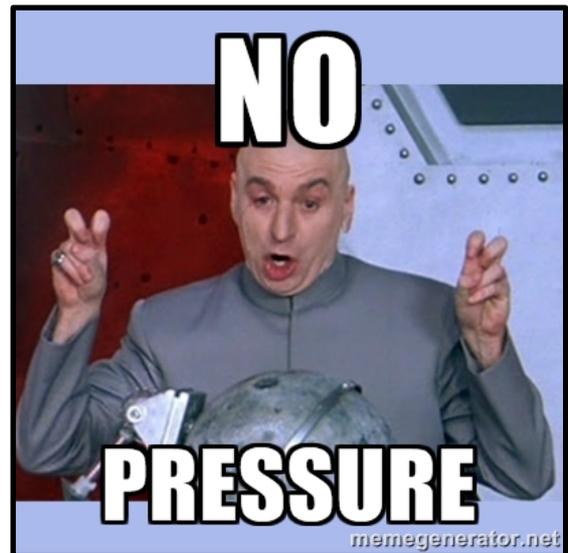
Knowing your campers
is one of the most
important jobs
you have this summer!



Your role

There are a lot of elements that make camp such a powerful experience for children, but one of the most important ones is relationships between Camp Leaders and Campers.

Our society segregates children by age, sorting them for academic reasons — Year 4, Year 5, Secondary school and so on — but such separation is not natural. Some children naturally want to “play up” with older kids; others want to “play down” with younger children, so they can consolidate their own developmental gains and practice leadership skills. It is almost impossible for children to find the opportunity to play with kids of other ages. Camp is a place where 11 and 12 year-olds can get close to 19 and 20 year-olds. Children who have been cared for all their lives by “old” parents in their 30s and 40s, or by “ancient” teachers moving through their 40s and 50s, are delighted by the novelty of sharing adventures — and their pain — with their peers and being cared for by appealing young adults in their late teens and early 20s. Any parent who has ever seen how much more effective a friend can be in calming their child under some circumstances, or who has seen their children’s devotion to their teenage babysitter, can imagine what it feels like to a 10 year-old child to find their camp filled with an army of friends and teenage babysitters.



Camp Leaders leave a very important mark on the lives of children.
Campers also give Camp Leaders life-long lessons in wisdom,
patience, and leadership.



1. You're a role model.

Whether you like it or not, you are a role model for campers! Not only that, you are the first British person a lot of our campers meet so the way you carry yourself at camp will have great impact on what they do and the way they perceive camp, and the UK in general, not to mention it may affect their moral perception in later life.

While employed by camp, you are required to adjust personal habits accordingly.

We completely understand that a lot of your habits may not be 'child friendly' but while you're at camp, 100% of what you do will have to fit in with our values and philosophy.

In this manual as well as during our training workshops, we will try to be as clear as possible about our values and philosophy. However, if there is ever something that you are not sure how to address, please come talk to us - we're camp veterans! :)

Please provide 3 examples of habits you think you may have to adjust while at camp:

2. You have daily responsibilities that you must not neglect!

In the morning, make sure that all campers attend their personal hygiene and dress appropriately for the day. You are not to do these things FOR THEM, but you are responsible for ensuring they do them. Please take into consideration the weather forecast (we will inform you about the weather every morning in our Morning Gathering!) and the activities they will be doing that day. Children this age do not have great judgement of this so it is your responsibility to inform them of what is and is not acceptable. They may tell you that 'it's ok for them to spend all day in a wet bathing suit or not brush their teeth because at home they do to all the time'. It is YOUR JOB as an adult, to make this judgement and inform them that they must put on suitable clothing. No parent would be upset to hear that their child was told to brush their teeth or get off a wet bathing suit, even if their children do get away with that at home... the opposite however may raise some serious eyebrows!

During the day, make sure that your campers drink enough water and apply enough sunscreen. Once again, children will NOT remember to do these things and may in fact tell you that they don't need to. It is YOUR JOB as an adult, to make the judgement on that and if necessary to tell them 'You have to'.

Make sure that your campers are eating well. Pay attention to what they put on their plates and be especially aware of children who are not eating enough, this is especially important for teenage girls.

If you see any campers doing something unsafe, stop them immediately. It doesn't matter if they are not your particular group of campers or if you are off duty. If you see any children doing something that you feel might result in an injury, please stop them immediately.

Clean hands. Even before Covid, this was KEY. Ensure that hands are getting cleaned before every meal. All tables are provided with hand sanitizer. When you and your campers arrive at the table, everyone gets one squirt of hand sanitiser. Here's a pretty gross fact: children are not great at cleaning their bums :) About a trillion germs can get onto hands after people use the toilet if hands are not properly washed, they can be passed from person to person very easily. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramps are a few of the lovely symptoms of gastrointestinal viruses that you can catch this way. Germs can also get onto hands if people touch any object that someone coughed or sneezed on. With children sharing a sleeping area, it's very easy for an entire camp to get sick within a day or two, so let's work together to make sure that doesn't happen!

Always make sure you have all your campers. Do not leave anyone behind. You and your campers must show up to Morning and Evening gatherings, activities and meals! This is a great teamwork exercise for the children and fundamentally, it helps us keep track of all children at all times. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU FOLLOW THIS RULE.

Always be on time. Yes, there will always be a camper who forgets their tennis racket, didn't tie up their shoe, left something in the room... These are not extenuating circumstances and are the norm when working with children; therefore they are not an excuse! It's your job to factor these things in and come up with fun engaging strategies to make sure that you and your campers always arrive on time.

Supervise clean up. The best way to engage your campers in typing up their areas is to set the example and get involved. We understand this is not the thing children are most looking forward to and we will have fun games and prizes to encourage them to clean up, but ultimately it's your responsibility to make sure that campers do their chores. We need to ask YOU guys, please, to check the rooms and bathrooms each morning and evening, and give the bathrooms in particular a once over. We ALL GET OUR HANDS DIRTY!!!

While you're at camp, you are the
children's main caregiver!

3. Follow the rules.

Our set of rules were designed having in mind everyone's safety and wellbeing. We're not rule freaks, but we do have over a decade of combined experience in the camping industry and know what can go wrong. If you have trouble understanding the reason behind any of our rules, do talk to us and we will be happy to explain the reasoning why they are in place. Some of them have purely everyone's safety in mind, some must be followed to promote fairness among campers and staff, and others must be followed for legal purposes and accountability. Consistency is another important trait, because it means fewer scattered and impromptu decisions which will ultimately 'protect you' and benefit you as well. Our rules are the tools to get things accomplished. They vary in degree of importance however they all must be followed.

Below are your day to day responsibilities. Please state 3 creative ways that you can use to enforce each one of them. Go back to the brief description of each one of them if you are not sure what each one of them entitle:

	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3
Being a Role Model			
Minding campers personal hygiene & clothing			
Water & Sunscreen			
Minding campers eating habits			
Never leaving campers behind			
Always being on time			
Supervising cleanup			

General Rules

Everyone makes mistakes and we don't expect you to be perfect. We are here to support you in doing your job the best way you can and become the epic Camp Leader that we know you are! However, it goes without saying that major violations of rules, endangering others, drinking, drugs, smoking, vandalism and poor performance are all grounds for immediate dismissal.

Working Hours

When on duty by 8am you will have to be ready for the day to start and you will be finished by 11pm. When off duty, you will finish at 9.30pm. You are required to take part in all of camp's activities throughout the day unless you have a specific period off or have been told otherwise.



Mobile phones & computers

Mobile phones and computer are only to be used on time off/ class preparation and away from the campers. Campers are not allowed to bring computers or mobile phones, and must never see you using your own. Never let a camper use your computer or mobile phone. Neglecting your responsibilities to check your computer or phone may put our campers in danger and therefore result in dismissal.

Reports

At the end of this handbook you will find the Ouch Report which you may have to fill out throughout the summer. We have a medical report book for small incidents too. We will go into further detail about the reports that you need to fill out. Not filling out reports when necessary fails to comply with the rules of camp.

Guest visits

You may only have guests visit you on your day off with prior approval from the Camp Director.

Curfew

You can all have a good time in HQ but we ask you to be back in your room at 11.30pm whether you are on or off that night.

Appropriate clothing and shoes

You may not wear clothes with inappropriate messages such as alcohol, drugs, profanity, skipping school, etc... You must wear closed toe shoes to all activities. Flip Flops are not allowed during activity periods and evening activities, unless you are told otherwise by the Camp Directors!

Personal Information

Parents often disclose their child's personal information to us, if they feel that it may affect their time at camp. For example, parents may let us know that they have gone through a divorce recently, or that their child is an occasional bed wetter, or sees a psychologist and/ or has behavioral issues, etc... A camper's personal information is of utmost importance to us; it is our duty to collect, use and disclose the camper's personal information responsibly. If we choose to share sensitive information with you it is because we trust you and we feel that you may benefit from having that information. You are to keep it to yourself. This information is obviously not to be shared with campers or OTHER STAFF MEMBERS.

Likewise, any personal information that you choose to disclose to us won't be shared with anyone else.

There is another type of information that you must be very careful about: As campers start to get to know you better, they are likely to try and find out as much as they can about your personal life :) They will want to know who you're dating, if you smoke, how you feel about certain rules at camp, etc... They will also just want to know what kind of music you listen to, if you've been to their country, what you like to do on your time off etc... We all have different boundaries and what some of us may consider private information, others may be willing to share. So this is a bit tricky...! You will have to use your judgement regarding what you think is appropriate to share. However, as a general rule, you are not to disclose any information about your love life or habits that are not suitable for children. Likewise, letting children know that you don't agree with a camp rule will not help you. It may initially make you feel that you have gained their trust, but the reality is that you will have to enforce that rule anyway and now you've opened the gate for campers to complain about it endlessly because they feel that they have your avail. You are very much encouraged to share your interests with the children - again - provided they are suitable to their age. You are not a teacher at a school. We encourage you to bond with your campers in a way that teachers can't. In fact, you will be

encouraged to share a significant personal story during Eventide. We want our campers to learn from you and your experiences. But it is also very important that you don't overstep the line and overshare inappropriate information with your campers.

Social Networks

Please turn your profiles to private before the children arrive if you haven't done so yet.

Tobacco

You may not smoke at camp under any circumstances. If you wish to have a cigarette during your time off, please head off camp to a designated smoking area, out of sight of campers, and be very careful about putting your cigarette out as we are in the middle of the woods.

Alcohol & drugs

If you possess or drink alcohol or illegal drugs on camp property, **you will be dismissed.** Likewise, you may not return to camp intoxicated - if you come back drunk / on drugs from your day off, **you will be dismissed.**





On Duty (OD)

Campers can never be unsupervised. Camp is NOT a 9-6 job. However, we have a rota system that allows you to take some time off during the day, while other Camp Leaders are 'on duty'. Being on duty requires you supervising campers on 2 occasions: Relax&Shower and Nighttime, Below is a list the different tasks that each one of these ODs entitle:

Breaktime

Breaks are supervised free time. One helper or leader will be in charge of giving out a snack and making sure campers are happy/ chatting, etc.

Relax & Shower

Relax & Shower is supervised free time for the campers, after all the afternoon activities take place. This is a good time for campers to take a shower.

During this time, you should do the following:

- Look out for campers that look lonely / sad / homesick
- Make sure that everyone is speaking in English
- Watch out for bullying
- Manage showers: make sure that everyone who is showering gets the time to do so, remind campers to change their underwear and socks, make sure that wet towels and any other wet stuff is left to dry. Older girls take FOREVER, you need to keep them short and sweet!
- Check showers are OFF and floors are dried – they leave water everywhere!
- Run tick checks
- Make sure everyone leaves for RTB/ supper on time

If you are not 'on section duty' you may relax and do whatever you want but DO NOT BE LATE FOR SUPPER.

Nighttime

Being OD at nighttime involves staying up until 11.30pm and doing the following:

- Do rounds to ensure that all campers are in bed past their bedtime, that they aren't talking until late hours of the night as this will make them tired (and grumpy!) the next day
- Deal with homesick children
- Deal with children that may not be feeling well

In other words, you will be on site to deal with anything that comes up between 9.30pm and 11.30pm and if we need help organising something for the following day we may ask you for help while you are OD.

Days Off

You will have a day off per week. Your days off will include the day in between camp after clean up! Your day off will be 24h long and the start time depends on what is happening that day. You will be given a rota during Staff Training so you know exactly when your days off are. If for some reason you need your day off to start slightly sooner / later please come talk to us as soon as possible.

We will do our very best to accommodate your requests regarding time off. This involves placing you on the same day off as someone else, granting you a particular day off for a concert / wedding / any previous commitment you may have or slightly altering the hours of your day off. The sooner you tell us about these things the better. If you wait until a few days before we may not be able to make it happen, for logistical reasons.

Periods Off

You will have one period off every day, at least. Normally, three of you will teach the English sessions in the morning, and then a different three will teach the Drama/ Performing Arts: Art & Craft; Sport & Adventure cycles before lunch. Then staff will take it in turn in pairs to monitor 'Project Time', then the English workshop (practical English with an activity), before the Electives in the pm. We normally offer at least 4 electives. We might occasionally pair you up with another Camp Leader to teach a particular English level, for example, one of you will teach the morning English lessons and the other will teach the afternoon English in action sessions. If you are assigned to the morning English lessons, you will be off every afternoon when your counterpart is teaching his / her English session to your group. If you are assigned to the afternoon English sessions, you will be off in the morning, when your counterpart is teaching the morning English lesson. However – all this changes year to year!

Nights Off

You will finish at 9.30pm every night, unless you're on duty. If you are not on duty, you are welcome to enjoy your night on or off camp, unless you are told otherwise. Once campers are settled, sometimes you won't be needed until that late – we will try to give you rest when you need it!!

Intersession

Our sessions are 2 weeks long. You will have a day (and a bit) and 2 nights off before the beginning of every new session.

How to be a successful Camp Leader



1. Establish desirable behaviour patterns at the beginning of sessions. It is MUCH EASIER to establish desirable behaviour patterns at the beginning of sessions than to alter problematic behaviour after it has developed. Establish your expectations from the start and be clear, fair and consistent. Remember that English is not our campers' first language so make sure they understand what is being asked of them.

2. Always be looking to catch campers doing something good. Children should be praised for the things they do well. This way, you'll be sending a consistent message of what good behaviour looks like and should you have to call them out on something, they won't feel like you only address their behaviour when it's not good. Be creative about the way you do both. You can have special group prizes and praises. You can also be funny about an undesired behaviour while still getting your point across.



3. Pick your battles. You can't win all the time. There will be times when you or the children are so tired that maybe clean up that morning won't be great. Can we live with your room not being mega tidy one morning? Yes, we'll survive. On the other hand, no matter what the situation is, the answer to *Can we go swimming without a lifeguard*, always has to be NO. These are just 2 examples of battles you will have to fight and you need to know when to stand your ground and when to simply let go. When you do let it go, be creative about it. Come up with a special amnesty day or X minute break. That way the children won't feel like they got away with not doing something, it'll still look like you're in total control.

4. Follow through. Be consistent with rules and expectations. Children will try to test your limits all the time, which is part of growing up! It's important that you are consistent and stick to what you say. You don't want to be labeled as the 'pushover Camp Leader'. It'll undermine your work and everybody else's.

5. Use 'Time Out's'. Sometimes it will be necessary to temporarily remove a disruptive camper from the situation in which their behaviour is having negative implications on them and their peers. You should remove them from this situation to a different location, with little or no enjoyable stimulation. Once removed, the camper should be allowed to return to the group after a short time and have some time to reflect on their behaviour.

6. Don't embarrass a camper in front of their peers. If you need to address a disruptive behaviour, always do it in private in a one to one situation.

7. Don't reward a camper with the attention they may be seeking. Again, if you need to address a disruptive behaviour, always do it in private.

8. Do not pick up the rope. When campers challenge you, it may be tempting to get into a power struggle with them. Even teachers and parents fall into this trap! This is the emotional tug of war- With you pulling on one side saying, "Look, I am the Camp Leader" and the camper saying a number of different things. This will make you less effective because children are then reacting to your anger and frustration, not your good intentions.

9. Enter their world. Children want adults to take an interest in their world. If you encounter a camper sitting on his/her bed playing a game or reading a book when they should be cleaning up, instead of barking orders, take a moment to be interested in what they are doing. This gives you an opportunity to enter the camper's world—interests, concerns, and a few moments spent looking together may eventually result in more compliance on their part.

10. Be the first one to model a good attitude and set the tone for what's cool. Not hanging out with someone just because they're different than you is *SO childish*. When you go to boarding school or university you have to live with all these different people and that is the coolest thing ever. Not participating in activities is *SO lame*; you can't wait to do skits (sketches) tonight and in fact, you and your friends do that sort of stuff ALL the

time. You get the gist. Anything that you can encourage indirectly by simply modelling that behaviour and /or branding it as cool and mature will save you hours of negotiations!

11. Be aware of language barriers. Our campers will have different English levels. You need to take the extra time to make sure they understand what is being told to them. This may involve explaining things slower or repeating yourself. At no point should a camper say that they didn't do something to because they 'didn't know they were supposed to do it'. If necessary, run a little quiz with them every morning to make sure they know what is going on that day.

3 tools to help you stay calm when a child pushes your buttons



When a child is upset, anxious or angry, keeping your cool is half the battle. It's a way for you to put out the fire by throwing water on the flames, rather than fan it by adding more fuel from your own emotional tank.

The important thing to remember is that all emotions are acceptable, but all types of behaviour are not.

Staying calm when dealing with children is much easier said than done. Knowing you should be calm doesn't necessarily translate into being able to be calm. We know the right thing to do, but in the midst of the battle our emotional brain gets stirred up and we lose sight of our logical brain. When our brain becomes overloaded with emotion, "reactivity" begins. Reactivity can come in the form of yelling, screaming, and shutting down, none of which will help you deal with any of the behaviour problems.

Our interactions with children can trigger our own feelings of frustration, disappointment and rage, to name a few. We are each vulnerable to different situations, and each "trigger" we have requires us to face ourselves, our limitations, our insecurities, and the less-than-perfect qualities we'd prefer to keep tucked away.

Your reaction to these emotions can cause you to make poor decisions. When our feelings control us, rather than us being able to control them, we have a much harder time doing your job.

Pause, breathe, think. Say to him / her, *"I'm going to go away for 5 minutes and figure out how to best deal with this situation. We can talk later."* When you feel red-hot inside, that's

your internal signal to take some deep breaths and think how to best and most effectively deal with the situation. Not only are you calming yourself down, but you are teaching the children how to do the same. Do this to avoid saying things that you may later regret. Needless to say, offending a camper, yelling at a camper, physically push a camper, is immediate grounds for dismissal. Don't ever let yourself get to this point.

Change your perspective. You must keep in mind that each camper is a different entity with different home conditions and different past experiences. If a child is displaying terrible behaviour, this might simply be a product of their upbringing - their family environment, the ways in which they've been taught to deal with adversity, etc... It is very important not to label children or equate their behaviour with their value. The children are not their behavior.

Remember that children are still growing. If a child is acting out, in the back of your mind, remember - he/ she is doing this because they're children. Children have not yet learned how to control their behaviour. You are the adult in this situation; it's your job to guide them by making sure they take responsibility and makes amends.

The not so favourite campers

You will have favourite campers, you will also have not so favourite campers. And you'll probably have some campers that are a bit..."meh" :) You're only human and you will not bond with all children in the same way. What you must never do is treat campers differently. So how will you manage to treat children in these three categories in the same way? The answer is... FITYMI (Fake it 'til you make it).

If you feel that a particular camper irritates you, you need to make an effort to treat him / her in the same way you treat your other campers. Watch your tone of voice when you talk to them, ask yourself 'Would I be telling him / her off for this if it had happened with someone else? Be aware of your facial expressions when you run into that camper - do you ever smile to him / her like you do to other campers?

The most remarkable moment is when a camper moves from the not favourite to the favourite list. There isn't always a happy ending though. Children are only with us for 2 weeks and sometimes that is not enough time for you to reach out to them; sometimes you get nowhere. You win some, you lose some! The important thing is that you always conduct yourself in a professional manner and do your very best, this implies not playing favourites.



It's from your least favourite campers that you will learn the most about yourself as a person.

Children will do **WHATEVER YOU DO!** Your attitude will be contagious to your group. If you look at activities, duties and situations in a positive way, so will you campers.

Be active in helping your campers prepare for special activities, campfires, overnights and skits (sketches).

You won't necessarily enjoy every single thing at camp. Maybe overnights are not your thing or maybe you had a really long day and wish you could just sit down and relax instead of preparing skits (sketches). You must not let that show. You need to power through and keep up the good vibes and you will see that you'll make the whole experience not just more fun for your campers but also much better for yourself!



Camp is what you make it

Let's put it this way: **YOU ARE CAMP.** Without you, camp would be nothing but a piece of land. Everything that we do at camp - songs, games, activities, lessons, campfires, skits (sketches) - will 100% depend on your enthusiasm and effort. And though it's all 'make believe', it's all quite tangible too. Children need guidance. If you're not there to help them sort out their ideas when they're preparing a skit or to teach them the songs you'll be singing throughout the summer, they won't do it by themselves. Camp is so much more than an activity centre, it's the result of all these special things which make it so unique.

The more you put into it, the more you'll get out of it.

Health & Safety

Things you can check to help along the way:

Be mindful of each camper every morning; look for anything “out of the ordinary” like the sniffles or sore throat. Covid aware – any symptoms must be reported immediately.

Make sure that campers wash, bathe and brush teeth, wear clean clothes, etc.

Pay attention to campers eating habits.

Promote a positive mental attitude among campers

Make sure campers are following the rules of camp and activity areas

Keep accidents to a minimum

Build up general health of campers

General Safety Considerations

You should always be aware of the following potential hazards around camp:

Water- Water is always a dangerous area, people can DIE, and we want everyone to return home at the end of the summer. No campers OR staff are permitted at the pool for any reason, especially NO SWIMMING WITHOUT TWO ADULTS PRESENT. NO LOOKING AT PHONES WHILE ON SWIMMING POOL DUTY.

Trails- Campers should always carry flashlights when walking along paths at night (e.g: during overnight).

Fire- Always a hazard. Smoking and any kind of open flame are prohibited in camp grounds. Our campfires are an exception, but they will be held in particular areas under supervision. NO SMOKING.

Intruders- You will see a lot of strangers coming in and out of camp on a daily basis: delivery guys, postman, tennis instructors, ice cream van, caretakers, family friends... If you notice someone is looking for something, not knowing where to go, do the following:

- Introduce yourself- let the person know your name and that you are a staff member
- Ask their name and what they are here for
- Escort them to the house to see whoever they are looking for
- If they refuse to give you any information, immediately find the camp director and let them know



**You are our eyes and ears on the
ground.
The children's wellbeing depends on
YOU!**



As part of our Health & Safety policy, you have to conduct tick checks.

Ticks can be as small as a poppy seed. There are many different species living in the UK. They get their name after the animal they rather feed from. The ticks most likely to bite humans in Britain are Sheep tick. Bites from other ticks are possible, including from the Hedgehog tick, the Fox or Badger tick, and the Deer tick which is the one that may carry Lyme disease.

Ticks don't jump or fly, but climb on to your clothes or skin if you brush against something they're on. They then bite into the skin and start to feed on your blood. That's when they pass on any diseases they may be carrying.

The risk of infection increases the longer the tick is attached. As tick bites are often unnoticed, it may be difficult to determine how long it has been attached which is why we carry daily tick checks at camp and consider any tick bite as posing a risk of infection.

TICK BITES

The bite is usually painless and most people will only know they have been bitten if they happen to see a feeding tick attached to them.

Adults are most often bitten around the legs. Children are generally bitten above the waist. Ticks generally love warm, damp areas – think groin and armpits.

TICK CHECKS AT CAMP

Ideally every day, before the children get in the shower, you must ask them to check for ticks:

- 1. Have the children lining up with their arms out in a T position.**

2. Check the following areas:

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Back of the knees
- In and around the hair
- Around the waist

3. Have the children check the following areas:

- Inside belly button
- Between the legs
- Crotch

You should also check yourself for ticks daily, either when you get in the shower or before you go to bed. Ask another Camp Leader to check the areas that you can't quite see, like you do for children.

Conducting a daily tick check can prevent transmission of most diseases. It typically takes more than 24-36 hrs of attachment for deer ticks to transmit Lyme disease.

LYME DISEASE

Not all deer/sheep ticks are infected with the disease – the infection rate goes to about 15%, depending on the area.

It's estimated there are 2,000 to 3,000 new cases of Lyme disease in England and Wales each year. There has been an increase of Lyme disease in the UK in recent years which is why Tick checking is extremely important!

Lyme disease can often be treated effectively if it's detected early on. But if it's not treated or treatment is delayed, there's a risk you could develop severe and long-lasting symptoms.

EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF LYME DISEASE

Many people with early-stage Lyme disease develop a distinctive circular rash at the site of the tick bite, usually around 3 - 30 days after being bitten.



The rash is often described as looking like a bull's-eye on a dart board.

The size of the rash can vary significantly and it may expand over several days or weeks.

Some people may develop several rashes in different parts of their body.

However, around 1 in 3 people with Lyme disease won't develop this rash.

Some people with Lyme disease also experience **flu-like symptoms** in the early stages, such as **tiredness (fatigue), muscle pain, joint pain, headaches, a high temperature (fever), chills and neck stiffness.**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A TICK

**If you find a tick on yourself or a child, report to us immediately.
Do not attempt to remove it yourself!**

TICKS THAT ARE NOT REMOVED PROPERLY CAN CAUSE VERY SERIOUS INFECTIONS AS IT IS VERY EASY FOR THE HEAD OF THE TICK TO REMAIN INSIDE THE CHILDS BODY!!!!!!

If you find a tick on yourself or a child, we will take you to the local hospital for it to be removed properly. This is a painless process.

You or the child will then be asked to monitor your health closely in the following weeks, and should you display any Lyme Disease symptoms, we will book a doctor's appointment immediately.

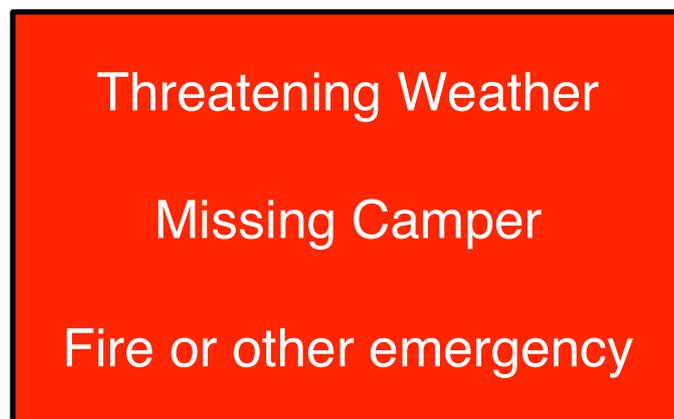
NIT CHECKS

We hate nits. So do you. We need to conduct a nit check on your campers almost upon arrival, in their rooms... it is not nice but trust us, it is worth it. Decide with the rest of the staff when best to do this check: possibly, the first English afternoon session.



A full stop is called any time a situation arises that requires response from the entire camp staff.

Scenarios that require a full stop fall into one of 3 areas:



If any of these situations arise, an emergency signal will be put out by the Camp Director and a FULL STOP will be called. This means the entire camp comes to a stop, whatever they're doing.

When an emergency is called, it is very important that you respond in a calm manner. If you panic, so will your campers! Silence your campers, walk them to the designated area, sit everyone down, take attendance making sure you have no extra campers, and wait for the further instructions.

Emergency signal: A very loud air horn.

Designated gathering area: Tennis Court.

We will run a drill during Staff Training.

Incidents & Emergencies

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergencies: 999
Hospital: 01256473202
Sacha: 07837747515
Daryll: 07976215792

Incidents

EVERY INCIDENT, NO MATTER HOW MINOR, must be reported in an Ouch Report/ Medical form and returned to the Office THE DAY IT HAPPENS. This goes for both camper and staff incidents.

Ouch reports are on the back of this handbook. An incident could be anything from a head injury to bug bites, scrapes, scratches, etc - even when the person says it's fine.



How to treat an injury

For small things, use the mini-first aid kits located at various areas around camp and vans. We will show you exactly where each one of them is. After using a first aid kit, it is very important that you put it back where it belongs.

As a precautionary measure against unknown infections, i.e. Hepatitis, HIV positive, etc., ALL PERSONS TREATING ANY INJURY MUST WEAR DISPOSABLE GLOVES. Breathing masks must be worn for rescue breathing. These items are in each first aid kit located in all specialty areas of camp and in the vans.

Medication



All medication must be stored in the director's office. This goes for both campers and staff.

If a camper is feeling sick, please direct them to the office and we will deal with it accordingly. Do not administer aspirin or any other form of medication to a camper without letting the Camp Director know.

At the beginning of each session we will provide you a list of campers taking medication, as well as all the allergies at camp.

What to do in case of Emergency

- 1. REMAIN CALM:** Act quickly but carefully.
- 2. DETERMINE:** Who is injured? What part of body is injured? How did it happen (fell down, bumped head, hurt arm, wrist, ankle, etc.)
- 3. SEND FOR HELP:** Send reliable help, two or more people to camp director's office. Provide basic injury information so we will know what type of first aid equipment to bring and whether we need to call the paramedics.
- 4. BEGIN EMERGENCY CARE (FIRST AID) - TREAT ACCORDING TO PRIORITY!**

* CALL 999 BEFORE BEGINNING TREATMENT FOR ANY SERIOUS INJURIES *

A. BREATHING - Ensure individual has an open airway and give mouth to mouth, or mouth to nose artificial respiration. If providing CPR and you do not feel comfortable giving

mouth to mouth, continue doing chest compressions at a rate to the song "Staying Alive"

B. BLEEDING - To control severe bleeding, first put on plastic gloves, then use direct pressure on wound and or apply pressure to major pressure points, radial/brachial arteries.

ELEVATE INJURED AREA IF POSSIBLE.

C. SHOCK - Keep injured person lying down if possible. Cover person if they feel cold or have chills. Elevate legs. Reassure person. DO NOT GIVE ANYTHING TO EAT OR DRINK.

5. DO NOT MOVE THEM UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. If the injured person is unable to move or stand on their own, DO NOT MOVE THEM UNLESS IT IS A LIFE THREATENING SITUATION.

6. KEEP SPECTATORS/GROUPS AWAY: Send other children to a different area where supervision is available or seek assistance from another staff member.

SPECIFIC INJURIES

A. MINOR SCRAPES & ABRASIONS – WEAR GLOVES. Clean wound with soap and water or antiseptic towelettes, dry area, apply antiseptic medication, cover with bandage.

B. INCISIONS & LACERATIONS (deep cuts) - WEAR GLOVES. Control bleeding, clean wound, apply antiseptic medication cover with sterile gauze bandage.

C. SPLINTERS - WEAR GLOVES. Clean area being careful not to push splinter deeper. Tweezers are kept in the first aid office.

D. NOSEBLEED - WEAR GLOVES. Have camper sit in an upright position with head tilted forward, (DO NOT TILT HEAD BACKWARDS). Apply ice over the nose and hold for 10 - 15 minutes. Keep camper quiet even after bleeding has stopped.

E. FISH HOOKS - Keep camper quiet and transport to the office. Camp Leaders are not to remove hook if it has penetrated the skin. Do not allow the camper to observe the hook wound, for this will increase the risk to shock. ALL FISHHOOK INJURIES MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.

F. BEE STINGS - Know ahead of time which of your campers is allergic to bees. If so, immediately apply ice to bee sting area and transport camper to first aid treatment center. If person is non-allergic, Camp Leader should remove stinger if present by gentle scraping. Apply cold and/or STING KILL medication.

ALL BEE STINGS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY AND CAMPER INVOLVED OBSERVED FOR SEVERAL HOURS IN CASE OF A DELAYED ALLERGIC REACTION.

Allergic reaction symptoms include swelling in location of sting, difficulty breathing, headache, and unconsciousness.

G. POISON OAK – Use protective gloves while doing the following procedure: Wash all suspected areas of contact with COLD water and soap. Take to first aid center for application of topical medication.

H. HEAD INJURIES - WEAR GLOVES .Control bleeding with direct pressure using sterile or clean covering. Transport or call for transportation. Treat for shock. CAMP DIRECTOR TO BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY WITH ANY HEAD INJURY-NO MATTER HOW MINOR!

Camper is to be observed for several hours for possible concussion.

I. BROKEN BONES - WEAR GLOVES .Treat all injuries with extreme caution if you suspect a potential broken bone. Control bleeding with direct pressure or at pressure point. Apply cold to minimize swelling. Treat for shock. Transport or send for help.

J. FAINTING - Have camper rest quietly. Treat injuries that have occurred as a result of fainting. Transport or send for help. CHILD IS NOT TO RETURN TO ACTIVITIES UNTIL CLEARANCE GIVEN BY FIRST AID SPECIALIST.

K. HEADACHES, UPSET STOMACHS, ETC. - Depending on severity and frequency, bring camper to first aid office or have him/her rest quietly. Provide water as desired.

L. INSECT BITES - Apply cold and/or STING KILL medication. Try to identify insect when possible, ant, mosquito, spider, etc. Keep camper under observation for possible allergic reaction. REPORT ALL BITES.

N. NECK OR BACK INJURIES - NEVER MOVE INJURED PARTY. Notify camp directors immediately. Keep injured party resting and immobilised.

TECHNIQUES TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

1. Place all supplies used for cleaning up body fluid spills in double, leak proof, plastic bags.
2. Turn gloves inside out as you remove them and then place in the leak proof disposable bag.
3. Treat all surfaces with 1 - 10 dilution water and bleach.
4. Wash your hands thoroughly after clean up.
5. If a breathing mask is used, then dispose of it in a leak proof plastic bag. Do not use a mask more than once.



LOST CAMPERS: hiking or on excursions (London etc)

TAKE A HEAD COUNT WHEN LEAVING AND ARRIVING TO EACH AREA! Know the number of kids with you each day. Reinforce how important it is that they stay with the group.

2. If a camper is missing, take a moment and retrace your steps. Think about where that camper might be (bathroom, drink of water...).
3. Talk to your other staff members! Send someone to the last place where you were.
4. If the child was not found, let the Camp Director know immediately.
5. Identify the missing child by name, age, hair color, group name, clothing, and any other distinguishing features (glasses, braces, etc.)

6. The Camp Director will organise a search group and proceed from there.
7. When the camper is found, welcome them warmly. If this child was lost, they could have been extremely frightened. This is NOT the time to discipline them! Reinforce how important it is to stay with the group.
8. Should this become a habit, notify the Camp Director.
9. Under no circumstances should you notify the parents of a missing child without discussing it with the Camp Directors first. The Camp Directors will call the local authorities, and take all the needed precautions.

Procedure on Hike -

After you have given first aid treatment, walk the injured camper to the nearest exit point. One Camp Leader if needed can hike ahead to get help for when the injured arrives. Call camp once at exit or ASAP.

In case of serious injury that can be moved:

In case of serious injury that cannot be moved:

Treat, stabilise, and calm the injured camper. One Camp Leader to hike out to the nearest trail and get help. Immediately call an ambulance and call camp straightaway.

In case of lightning/ dangerous weather:

First hike to a shelter and wait out the storm. If the storm arises quickly, seek shelter in low lying trees. Proceed to hike when storm subsides. If conditions are still dangerous and or impassable, retreat to the nearest exit and call camp.



Child disclosure procedures

At the point of disclosure

Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

How children disclose abuse

A child's disclosure is not always straightforward. They might have decided to speak to you but a lot of the times the ways in which children disclose abuse are indirect or accidental. Children sometimes attempt to alert adults they trust to the fact they are being, or have been abused, by making ambiguous verbal statements.

What to do during the disclosure

If a child has decided to speak to you, then there is a good chance they trust you.

Give the child your full attention.

Be patient - Let the child take his or her time and use his or her own words.

Reassure the child that it is right to tell.

Don't ask the child to disclose anything other than what he / she is comfortable telling you and recognise the bravery/strength of the child for talking about something that is difficult.

Don't make promises you can't keep

Abused children are often embarrassed about what has happened to them. In addition, sometimes they fear repercussions or the consequences for parents whom they love in spite of the abuse. Because of this, when a child makes a disclosure to you, they will most likely ask you to promise secrecy before disclosing. *'I have something to tell you but you have to promise you won't tell anyone'*. Such a promise should NOT be made. By telling the child: *"I can't make that promise, but I can tell you I will do my best to keep you safe"*, you can reassure the child, manage expectations, and encourage him/her to speak out about abuse. You can certainly reassure them that this information will not be shared with any other camper.

Let the child or young person know what you will do next

You owe it to the child to let them know that this will be taken further. Try to avoid speaking about organisations and authorities that the child may not be familiar with and overwhelm them with all this, you would just tell the child that you'd have to let the camp Directors know and we will take it from there. Again, assure them that no other camper will find out and that he / she will be safe.



What is homesickness?

“Missing Home? Do you mean ‘homesick?’” Well, yes... and NO! The feeling that is too often called “Homesick” is the feeling of missing family and familiarity with everyday things that define our lives. For the vast majority of campers, their time at summer camp is the longest they have ever been away from home without Mum or Dad—ever. It is a big step!

We all take that step at different times in our lives, and that feeling of missing home is a feeling that we all have at some point—it is part of what makes us human. So, missing home is really not a sickness at all. Dealing with the feeling of missing home is a BIG part of why we are here, to help campers learn!

Homesickness symptoms

Symptoms may vary from person to person, but in general, homesickness can leave you feeling upset, distressed, isolated, or lonely. You might also feel nostalgic for home, even simple things like your old pillow or the smell of your house. Homesickness can affect people of all ages in almost any situation but it’s particularly prevalent amongst younger children. Although it is psychological, homesickness can have some real physical manifestations, ranging from a mild nervousness to isolation, appetite loss and stomach aches.

Homesickness described by campers:

“You just feel kind of sad. You don’t want to talk to anyone else.”

“I just wanted to be alone in my bed. I haven’t actually cried at night. I normally cry after lunch or after dinner.”

“I felt like I had a fire in my stomach, and it was burning... I didn’t know what it was but it terrified me... I didn’t want my friends to make it better. I just wanted to wallow in my sadness”.

“People told me that I should get distracted and that would help me, but I just wanted to get my tears out.”

Homesickness causes

If a child loves his or her parents and has a good home, why wouldn’tt he or she feel some longing for mum, for dad, for the dog and friends back home? It is completely normal for a child to miss home. However these feelings are often triggered by the following:

Factors that cause a pre-disposition to missing home:

- Attachment between parents and campers
- Attachment to friends and pets back home
- Attachment to home lifestyle
- Being sent to camp against camper’s will
- Recent changes in the family (e.g parents getting divorced).

These situations make campers more vulnerable to homesickness, and though there is nothing you can do about it, you can certainly take a pro-active approach in identifying the children that you think are most likely to feel homesick and keep an eye on them.

Factors that trigger homesickness at Camp:

- Lack of friends at camp
- Language barriers
- Illness / Injury
- Lack of a supporting atmosphere

These situations generate fear in children (and often in us adults too!). Fear of not fitting in, fear of change, fear of failure. In fact, most cases of homesickness seem to be associated with a child's fear that she/he does not "have what it takes" to survive without family: "I know I am ok at home, but I am not sure about camp." As a result of these self-doubts, the camper starts feeling some insecurity which often results in "I wish I was home".

We are going to give you the tools act on these factors and help create an environment where children are having so much fun and feel so supported that they feel... at home!

How common is homesickness?

97% of children experience at least some occasional homesick feelings at camp.

19% of children experience "significant distress" at various times during a camp session, characterised by acute yearning and obsessional thoughts of home, parents, favourite foods, and pets.

8% of children suffer from a severe homesickness that is with them every day of a camp session. For these children, homesickness only dips in the last few days when they know their caretakers will be arriving soon.

In a nutshell, research tells us that even though almost all children will have some homesick feelings, only one in five campers experience real distress. And only 8% of children develop such severe homesickness that they're unable to beat it.

When is homesickness most likely to occur?

*"Were you homesick at camp?"
"Yes, whenever I had the time!"*

Homesickness usually occurs during the first few days. Most of the time, campers only become homesick during times of inactivity when they have time to reflect on home and their normal routine, like during rest hour or at night. It is rare for a child to be affected the entire day.

The paradoxical thing about camp is that even though children sometimes report painful levels of homesickness, they often rate themselves as very happy in the activities during the day.

This is why you can tackle homesickness by distracting children with games, contests, skits, or singing — the traditional staples of camp. The ordinary camp program is sufficiently entertaining, comforting, and distracting to meet the emotional needs of most children.

What can I do to prevent homesickness?

1. Follow the plan for an active schedule

The single most effective thing that you can do for homesick campers is to do what you do best: to have fun with them! You can address homesickness by distracting children with games, contests, skits, or singing... As we mentioned, the ordinary camp program is sufficiently entertaining, comforting, and distracting to meet the emotional needs of most children.

2. Create a socially safe environment where children can make friends

Children are much less likely to feel homesick if they have at least one friend to enjoy camp with! However not all kids make friends easily. If you see a camper sitting around looking sad, GET INVOLVED! Find interests that appeal to your campers, pair them up with other children with the same interests, run icebreakers, work on team building to develop a group that support each other.

3. Catch it early.

Be alert to feelings of missing home. Be especially observant during meals, rest hour and evenings when there is more time to reflect.

What can I do to help a homesick child?

Despite our best attempts to prevent homesickness, as we previously mentioned 97% of children experience at least some occasional homesick feelings at camp. The good news is that 81% of them recover from it relatively quickly when supported by their friends, comforted by talks with their Camp Leaders, and distracted by camp activities.

It is essential to have a busy engaging program at camp and we are here to make sure that happens. However, the true magic of camp does not reside in the daily program of camp events — it lies in the relationship between children and other children, and between YOU and them.

1. Make the time to listen

Having a young adult pay attention to you when you are young and homesick can feel wonderful. However, a large quantity of attention is not enough; the quality of attention is important. It is not enough for a Camp Leader to listen to a child and offer generic responses: “Lots of kids feel homesick, but they get over it. You’ll be fine in a few days.” Indeed, too-fast and superficial reassurance can be confusing for a child who knows it isn’t going to be enough, but isn’t able to educate or inform the Camp Leaders to do better.



If, however, you do a few straightforward things with a homesick child, it can be enormously effective. You have to make some time to listen, you have to ask some questions about what the child misses to empathise with the homesickness, and you need to normalise the child’s emotions. That means saying, “ I can see you are really missing home. I can see that it really hurts you. That’s tough. But guess what, it’s completely normal. Everyone feels a little homesick sometimes; even us and we are going to help you get through it.”

This is counterintuitive for most of us. We see someone in pain and reflexively want to offer quick reassurances. After all, it is hard to sit in the presence of someone else’s pain. It makes you feel a bit helpless and sometimes and seriously incompetent. No one likes that feeling. Further, most people are afraid that if they delve into a child’s pain, asking for further details, it will cause the child greater pain. Finally, if you start to ask a crying child to talk about what makes him or her sad, you cannot be sure how long the process is going to take. So if you have a group of children waiting in the room, or the group is in transition from activity A to activity B, it may feel ill-advised to invite a child to talk more. Things cannot always be brought to a complete stop. We will shortly go over what you should do when this happens - when you don’t have the time to listen.

To summarise, first and foremost, you should:

- **Make the time to listen**
- **Ask questions about what they miss**
- **Empathise with the homesickness**
- **Normalise their emotions**

2. Know the Do's and Don'ts

Quick check-ins & Group sessions

A quick check-in helps most campers with mild homesickness, and sometimes a group discussion can do the trick: a group conversation at bedtime, for example. When a whole group of children is showing signs of homesickness, you can have them describe their bedrooms to each other and to you, in minute detail. You can also describe your own room at home to them. You will see that the children will feel comforted by the extended opportunity to share these details of home. Other strategies include having the whole group describe their favourite meals. You get the gist! Anything that is familiar and that can simultaneously be turned into a fun, quick game. You can also tell them that you will ask them one question about someone else's room / meals etc to make sure that they are actually listening to what other people are saying and not just dwelling in their own sadness.

Keep it short

You want to take the time to address homesickness properly, it is not something to be done in a rush. However, you also don't want to turn it into a one-hour therapy session every time. Try to keep the group games short. In fact, you can actually time them. You want campers to have the comfort of remembering their home in a positive way, not to dwell in all the things they are missing. Likewise, when you talk to a camper in private, you want to take them time to listen to them and go through all the steps that we've previously discussed but when you feel that it's not going anywhere and that you are going around in circles, it's time to let it sync in and move on. Later, you can check on that camper to see how he/she is doing!

Homesickness is... contagious!

As we mentioned, if a child / group of children are a little homesick at bedtime a group talk can be a great thing. However, a homesick child can also make everyone else in the room start feeling that way. So you'll have to make a judgement on that and decide when to remove a child from the rest of the group in order to deal with it in private and prevent the rest of the group from feeling the same way! Trust us; you don't want to have to deal with an entire room of sobbing children :)

If hysterical behaviour develops, be firm. Hysteria must have an audience. Thus, removing a hysterical camper from their audience is usually best. However, do not do this in order to provide increased attention. You can remove them from the situation and have them sit down, drink a glass of water, take a deep breath, count until 10, listen to a few songs, until they are calm enough to talk.

Don't make deals

Don't make deals with the campers regarding when they can call home / go home. This is a decision for the camp directors. As far as the children know, campers are NOT allowed to call home / go home at any point. You have to be firm and CLEAR on this.

The answer to "Can I call home?" is ALWAYS the same. If we feel that we must put a child in contact with their parents, we will. However, entertaining this idea on campers has a very negative effect. Children do not tend to feel better when they call home; they usually feel much worse. Parents don't always say the right thing, and for some campers, just listening to their parents' makes them feel more homesick.

The answer to "Can I go home?" is ALWAYS the same. We are best positioned to make the decision that a child is too homesick to stay. As much as the child wants to go home, he or she doesn't want to feel like a failure in front of peers who are able to remain at camp. Parents of a camper who has to leave camp early often feel like failures as well. Why is their child not capable of making it away from home? Did they cultivate excessive anxiety or dependence in their son or daughter? This is not always the case; it may just not work out that first or second summer. But for these reasons, this is a decision that only we will make.

When you don't have the time to listen

If you make empathic contact with a child and say something that truly acknowledges the child's pain, then it can be relatively easy to say, "I really want to talk to you about this, but we've got to sit at the table now. Do you think you can talk more about this after supper?"

After supper, or when there is more time, you need to ask the camper some questions about what they miss and listen to some of their stories. If a child feels that his or her homesickness is seen and acknowledged, that will be of significant help to most children. It cannot be done in a rush, though it doesn't have to turn into a one-hour therapy session every time. There must be a fairness principle at work; all the campers need your time and you have to spread yourself evenly.

Children in significant distress

But what about the 1 in 5 campers who experience significant distress? And what about that 6% whose homesickness gets more severe as the session goes on? What can you do for a seriously homesick camper?

For campers who are experiencing above-average levels of homesickness, it is important to help them think through what they have found helpful. Did the letter from home help when it first arrived? Perhaps the child could read it again, or read it out loud to you. Are there things that a child wants to say to his mum and dad? You can suggest that they write a letter. Write

down his or her thoughts. It is enormously helpful to a child to say what they wish they could say to their parents with you listening. Write it down and hand them the piece of paper when they're finished. Perhaps he or she can later put those thoughts in a letter, or maybe not. But having expressed them out loud will help.

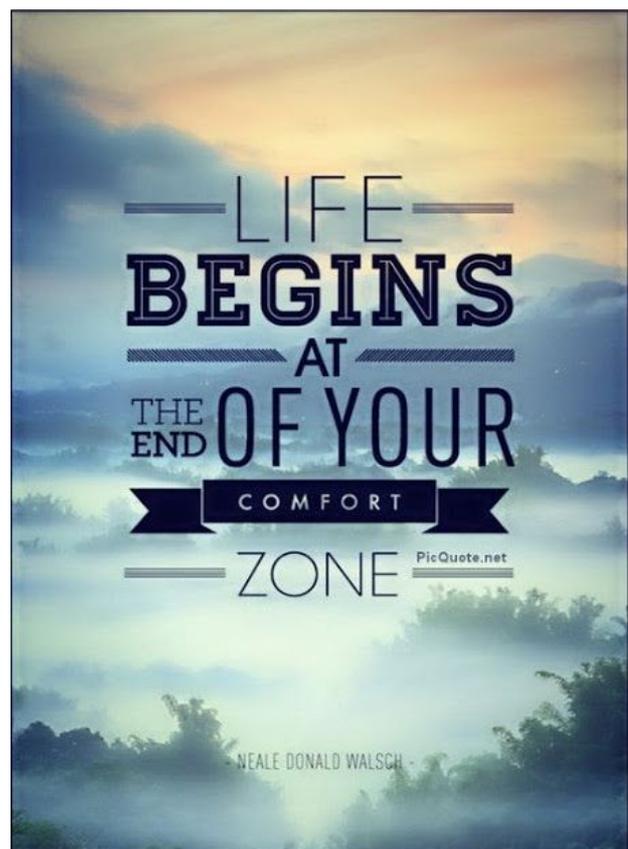
For children in significant distress, it can be comforting to feel that they are in the hands of the camp director. The camp director may be able to speak with the authority of a parent, or be able to speak to a child about a phone call he or she had with the parent about the situation. It is enormously comforting to children to know that the people who are taking care of them are communicating their situation to their parents. For many children, that is sufficient to give them the courage to stay at camp.

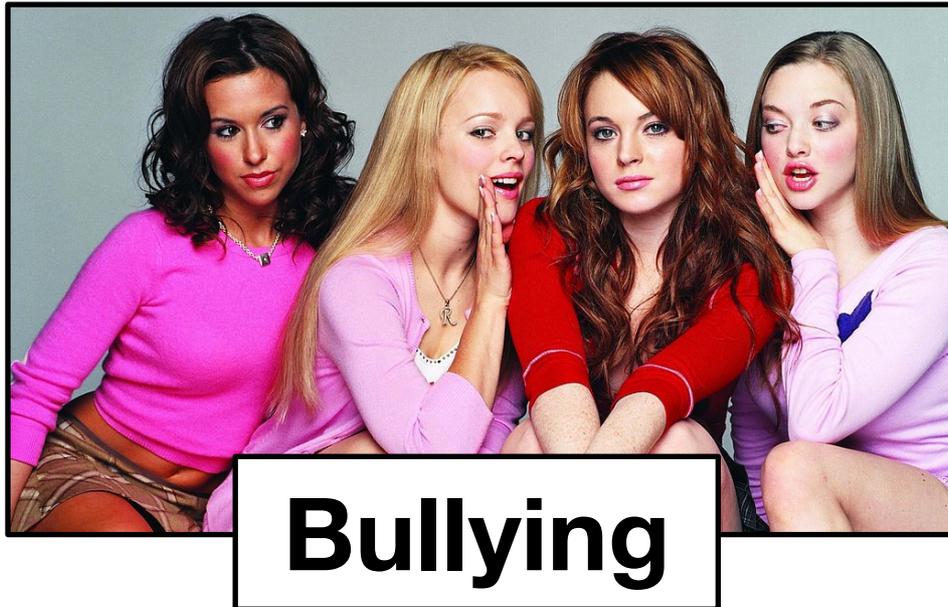
Why is it important to power through it?

Let's look again at the underlying anxiety of feeling homesick: "I'm afraid because I don't know if I have what it takes to survive away from home." At the root here is self-doubt. This is where the opportunity arises.

Beating homesickness is worth it because the payoff is pretty big. Children who doubted whether they could survive away from home, once they not only survive, but thrive in the camp environment, what do they now believe about themselves? They now think "Wow, I am more capable than I ever imagined! I still love home, but my fear that I could not survive outside of my mum's shadow is wrong. I am strong!" As you can imagine, this does a lot for self-confidence. In this way, homesickness is an opportunity to help a camper grow into a resilient and capable adult.

When you consider that 99% of children succeed at camp, when you reflect on the fact that a majority of the most homesick children return to a residential camp the following year, you have to admire the courage of children. They understand intuitively that leaving home is a challenge they have to master sooner or later. Even a failed first attempt is worthy of respect.





5 easy things that could help you prevent bullying:

1. On the first night of camp, you and your campers will work together to create a 'Code of Conduct'. **Make sure you include 'No Bullying' in the Code of Conduct.**
1. **Create your group dynamic.** From the minute children arrive to camp; this should be one of your primary goals. The best antidote to bullying is a strong group dynamic, and you can cultivate this through creating an environment in which campers work together and encourage one other to succeed.
2. **When you see something — do something.** Pay attention to your group dynamic. Little comments that campers make about each other, little remarks, campers that were left out from games and conversations. Don't brush it off as "kids are just being kids." You should address these things immediately to stop a situation from escalating.
3. **Identify the potential bullies / bullied children and keep an eye on them.** You can usually spot who the easy targets are. Children that look different, children who are from a culture with different habits, children that are over protected or have low social skills, children who are too attached to adults... You can also spot children that are very quick at making fun of anything that is not familiar to them, children who are very 'clicky' and need to be the centre of attention at all times... This is not to say that all of these children will be bullied / bullies. But if you recognise the profile of bullied children / bullies, you are most likely to be able to prevent it.
4. **Mind the way you act in front of your campers.** Children will pick up on these things. The way you rolled your eyes when you talked about a certain camper, the exasperation in your

voice when you called their name, these are all little queues that children will pick up on and that will empower them to bully the camper in question.

Girls bully differently from boys

Girls and boys bully in unique ways. As a general group, boys spend more time with boys in physical activities such as sports and games; girls tend to spend more of their time socialising with other girls in more friendship-based activities (e.g., talking with other girls). So it is no surprise that boys and girls tend to bully and be bullied differently.

Girls will say and do things that make others feel alienated and alone. Being singled out in a group, ridiculed by peers, excluded from social activities, or alienated from the group are all forms of bullying and very hurtful for the victim. It is usually very subtle and sometimes it's not even so much about what is being said but how they say it. It could be something as simple as *"Oh. That's what you are wearing tonight?"*. If you pay attention to it though, you will be able to recognise it straight away. After all, we've all been kids once!

Boys are more straight forward. They are more likely to use offensive words: 'You're a loser, you're a weirdo' and to leave other boys out from activities, run away and hide from them... Not saying that boys are more basic but... boys' behaviours are a lot easier to identify :) The risk here is to dismiss it as "Boys being boys'. Boys will be boys indeed, but bullying must not be tolerated under any circumstance.

Children who 'make themselves' the target



You may feel that some of the children being bullied are sort of... 'asking for it'. This is perhaps not the most politically correct way to phrase it but this thought has crossed a lot of Camp Leaders' minds. Some children have personality traits that make them very irritating to everyone around them. So whereas you would surely never allow anyone to bully a child with

a disability, when the victim happens to be someone who is incredibly 'spoiled' and has been annoying everyone around them, including you... you may be tempted to just let it slide. Trust us, we've all been there :) When you are faced with these circumstances, you have to remind yourself that you don't know that child's full story. And even when you come across a child who is 'spoiled' as we mentioned, and displays selfish and obnoxious behaviours that lead

other children to bully him/ her, it's not their fault. They are being set up for failure by their parents and their upbringing is causing them to feel miserable among their peers - not fully understanding why - and that is not fair on them. Under no circumstance should you tolerate bullying under the pretext that 'they have to learn'. Bullying doesn't teach anyone a thing, it only draws people further apart and makes the victims more bitter and disconnected.

What can you do to stop the bullying in a situation like the one above?

Children with a diagnosis

We may disclose sensitive information to you about certain children in your group. It may also happen that certain information has not been disclosed to us. After dealing with a child for a while, you may become aware they are going through something, or behaving somewhat abnormally. Children dealing with certain situations like autism, anger management, ADD, may have had a particularly hard time with other kids. If you feel like you are in this kind of a situation, you need to find a way to explain to the other children that, for example, little Peter is slightly autistic, without saying so. Obviously, this can be tricky. Unfortunately, we are not allowed to disclose this information directly. So, that's something to think about and maybe to brainstorm before you discuss this with the other children.

What can you do to stop the bullying in a situation like this?

How to address bullying

Deal with children individually. Don't attempt to sort out the facts while everyone is present, don't allow the children who are involved to talk with one another, and don't ask bystanders to tell what they saw in front of others. Instead, talk with the individuals involved — including bystanders — on a one-on-one basis. This way, everyone will be able to tell their side of the story without worrying about what others may think or say.



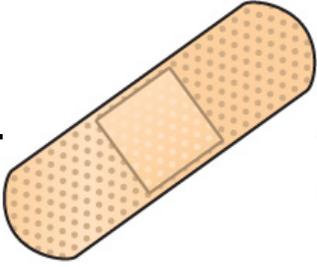
Listen and don't pre-judge. It is very possible that the person you suspect to be the bully may actually be a bullied student retaliating or a "bully's" cry for help. It may also be the result of an undiagnosed medical, emotional or psychological issue. Rather than make any assumptions, listen to each child with an open mind.

Don't make the campers involved apologise and/or shake hands on the spot. Label the behaviour as bullying. Explain that you as an individual and camp as a whole take this type of behaviour very seriously and that you plan to get to the bottom of it before you determine what should be done next. This empowers the bullied child — and the bystanders — to feel that someone will finally listen to their concerns and be fair about outcomes.

Hold bystanders accountable. Bystanders provide bullies an audience, and often actually encourage bullying. Explain that this type of behaviour is wrong, will not be tolerated, and that they also have a right and a responsibility to stop bullying. Let them know that they must come to you if they see or suspect bullying. You can have a little box in your room where children can leave anonymous notes if it helps. Be creative!

NOTES

OUCH REPORT



R: _____

NAME OF CAMPER: _____

TYPE OF INCIDENT: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

IF INJURY, NATURE OF INJURY: _____

(Scrape, Sprain, Bite, Bump, Cut, Splinter, Burn, Scratch, Bruise)

LOCATION OF INJURY: _____

(Left side, Right side)

Your signature: _____ Camp Director's signature: _____