**South Carolina Cadet Leadership Course**

**Harassment, Bullying, Sexual Assault**

**Manual**

All staff coaches of the **South Carolina Cadet Leadership Course**

will receive a copy of the following information pertaining to Sexual Abuse, Harassment and Bullying. They will be required to read the following and sign/date manual prior to beginning their employment at the camp.

**Understanding Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for Adults**

1. In the United States, childhood sexual abuse has been reported up to 160,000 times per year. Although this figure appears high, such abuse is dramatically under-reported because children are afraid to tell and because the legal process is difficult. Statistics vary, but actual abuse, whether reported or not, may occur with as many as one-third of girls and one-fourth of all boys.

2. Once sexual abuse has been identified, the child should receive professional help. The long-term psychological effects can be devastating for children who have been sexually abused (see item 3).

3. "Red flags," or symptoms that may help identify children who have been sexually abused, can include unusually increased or decreased interest in sexual matters, sleep problems, school avoidance, self-harming or aggressive behaviors, seductiveness, and enactments of molestations in play.

4. Children who have experienced repeated incest may become passive and seemingly accepting of these acts over time, a process known as "the accommodation syndrome." They usually have low self-esteem and an abnormal perspective on sexuality.

5. Children who care for their abuser are often trapped between feelings of loyalty to that person and the sense that the sexual activities are wrong. Incest also affects a child's relationship with all other family members.

6. Sexual abuse of boys is seriously under-reported. Like girls, boys are more commonly abused by men; these boys may experience confusion about their sexual identity and fears of homosexuality at the time of the abuse or later.

7. Children and adolescents who have been sexually abused are more likely to engage in dangerous risk-taking behaviors during adolescence, including coercive sex (as either the aggressor or the victim), unprotected sexual activity, and self-harming behaviors such as cutting, driving while intoxicated, and even suicide attempts.

8. Parents and other adults need to educate themselves about both normative and unhealthy childhood sexual behavior and promote good communication with children. As a part of this, adults need to alert children to the potential of adults touching their bodies and encourage the children to tell them if this happens.

9. Adults need to encourage professional prevention programs in the schools.

10. Parents and other adults need to pay attention to their own attitudes and behaviors around sexuality, including participation in dangerous patterns, neglect of sexuality as a healthy aspect of life, or forced sex. Children are watching and imitating, whether they acknowledge this or not.

What do you do?

Sexual assault is an inclusive label that subsumes many sexual acts. These typically include forced sexual contact (e.g., fondling, kissing, and petting), attempted rape, and completed rape. The common factor is that a person is touched in an unwelcome sexual way. Many camp directors, when faced with an accusation of sexual assault, respond in one of two contrasting ways. In the first, the camp director simply fires the accused. The risk here is that the accused is innocent of the charges. In the second, the response is to minimize the dilemma. The accused might be told to not do it again and then put back into the camp community — the consequence is merely a proverbial "slap on the wrist."

Both responses affect the entire camp community. Because of the intimacy inherent in a camp environment, news of a sexual assault is bound to spread. An immediate termination risks a reputation of unfairness for the director. The marginal punishment, on the other hand, is evidence to staff that the camp director does not take the issue of safety seriously. If one staff member can sexually attack another member without repercussions, what else will staff members get away with? Of course, in particularly egregious cases, an immediate termination along with police involvement is a necessity. In others, a minimal response is sufficient. Many camp directors unfortunately have a tendency to rely on one of these two responses. However, each case of sexual assault is different; no one solution will work in every case. Camp directors need the appropriate information that allows them to respond in a reasonable, efficient, timely, and defendable manner in incidents of sexual assault between staff members.

Sexual Assaults in Camps

The American Camping Association's The CampLine presents an annual account of calls to the ACA hotline for camp-related problems. For the summer of 2002, there were three allegations of staff-on-staff sexual abuse (Scanlin, 2002). The 2003 edition reported no such allegations. The overwhelming majority of incidents of sexual assault that occur in the United States is never reported. Camps that experience such behaviors may have purposely refrained from reporting the incidents. Another more likely reason for the lack of reporting is simply because these occurrences did not come to the attention of camp administrators.

While a sexual assault by a stranger may occur on camp property, we have a much more realistic concern with such violence occurring within a relationship. In fact, most cases of sexual assault take place within the confines of a pre-established relationship. These relationships can be between friends, romantic partners, or just a passing acquaintanceship. Rarely do they occur between individuals who had no prior contact. In most cases of forced sexual activity, we are referring to a victim as a female and a perpetrator as a male. Because of the size difference between males and females, females are the common victims in reported sexual assault cases. It is difficult for a female to be intimidating to a male if she is smaller, weighs less, and is less strong.

**A Developmental Perspective on Sexual Assault**

It is difficult to be partial when a victim of sexual assault is describing an attack. One will naturally be inclined to have sympathy for the victim and disdain for the accused. While it might be tempting to slip into polarized thinking at this point with an easily identified victim and villain, the reality is that such thinking may be more harmful than helpful for all involved parties.

It is likely that the cause of a sexual assault between staff members in camp is that a male misinterpreted a female's cues concerning sexual activity. There are three underlying reasons for such an occurrence. First, males and females do not typically enter romantic relationships with the same set of interpersonal skills. As the result of often vastly different experiences in childhood, romantic relationships are frequently tumultuous. Research has found:

Because of such segregation, boys and girls grow up with different experiences of the world and learn different interpersonal skills. These different skill sets assure that there will be misunderstandings and complications when the two sexes interact. This often vast difference in interpersonal skills is particularly complicated when it comes to sexual interactions.

The second underlying reason is that in many cases there is no direct request for sexual activity — much of the initiation of sexual activity between two people occurs through indirect means. Males may treat a date to a very expensive meal, attempt to ingratiate themselves, and profess love to partners that they in no way actually feel. A study by Greer and Buss (1994) found that the most successful tactic to engage a female in sexual activity is to invest time and attention as well as profess love and commitment. In regards to females, Perper and Weis (1987) found that females also have an armory of techniques to express sexual interest including talking (e.g., laughing, complimenting, sexual talk), environmental signaling (e.g., seductive clothing, dancing, creating a "romantic atmosphere"), touching (e.g., holding hands, caressing), and kissing.

While it would certainly be easier to directly ask a person for their interest in participation in sexual activity, the reality is that many couples rely on less direct methods. It is the ambiguity of the indirect methods that is often the root cause of a sexual assault that occurs in camp. Males in particular tend to misinterpret even the most neutral signals as sexual invitations. Likewise, males often misinterpret a female's protestations as mere token resistance; in some males' eyes, a woman's statement of "no" is a façade in effect so as not to appear too sexually available.

There is one final additional complication to the already complex mix of interpersonal skills, differences between the sexes, and the ambiguities of sexual signaling and interpretation — sexual arousal affects the functioning of the human brain. Sexual arousal can interfere with judgment and self-control. Such arousal may not only lower one's inhibitions and lead to the use of coercion but additionally reduces awareness of the reactions of one's partner. Long-term consequences are minimized or out-and-out ignored during moments of passion.

In summary, when a staff member reports a sexual assault, it is highly unlikely that the alleged perpetrator is a sexual psychopath. A more realistic appraisal is that a male may have misinterpreted mutual sexual interest on the part of a female. However, this does not excuse his behavior.

**Prevention and Intervention**

A director is legally obligated by federal law to intervene to stop sexual harassment in a camp. An isolated sexual assault on a co-worker would likely not be classified as sexual harassment as it is delineated in the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the federal agency established to deal with workplace discrimination. An assault committed by a supervisor, however, is always sexual harassment. In the case of camps, I recommend that all camps take a sexual harassment prevention perspective even when the assault occurs between co-workers. It offers not only a recognized legal model for intervention but also makes practical sense in coping with the aftereffects of an accusation. A singular incident of unwanted physical contact may indicate an environmental problem with a camp. Maybe it is less safe than the director believes. Maybe there are numerous unwanted sexual behaviors occurring that remain hidden from the administration. This supposedly isolated incident may reveal troubling undercurrents.

The following are several guidelines for a camp director to keep in mind when a sexual assault is reported.

1. Stay calm.

It does not help anybody if the camp director loses control in a critical incident. Many directors will be worried about the implications of such an incident on their own and their camps' reputations instead of focusing on more important immediate action steps. For example, I can well recall the first time I had to intervene in a sexual assault incident in a camp. Not only was I concerned with the welfare of the participants involved but also the reputation of the camp as well as my own. How should I handle this event? Had I somehow allowed this to incident to inadvertently occur? How would this incident reflect on my leadership? Would I lose my job over the occurrence? Would the media somehow become involved? Such concerns prevented my full attention to the immediate incident.

2. Give the victim partial control of the situation.

A sexual assault is a crime no matter what degree of seriousness it entails. The most important choice a victim can make is whether she wants to call the police or not. This contact initiates involvement of the legal system, and it is this system that will determine whether a crime has occurred. It is not the victim's choice however to determine the punishment of the offender (e.g., Should he be fired?). I have heard of camps that granted this right to a victim. Remember, an accusation against a person does not necessarily equate with actual guilt.

Some aspects need to be considered in regards to police investigation. First, every state now has a mandatory reporting protocol in place for child abuse. If the victimized staff member is under the age of eighteen, the director may be obligated to report this to a youth protective agency. Second, some camps have a policy that requires police to question all cases of sexual assault even if the victim declines such involvement; this is done not so much for the protection of the victim but rather to have a written record on file for the camp's own legal security. The downside to mandating police investigation is that it might deter a female from reporting less severe incidents to the administration if she knows that she will have to speak to police.

It is recommended that all directors contact their local police and youth protective agency to ascertain their requirements for incidents of sexual assault.

3. The camp director is not a judge.

The good news is that camp directors are not responsible to decide innocence or guilt. This is a decision that the legal system undertakes. For camp directors to attempt to secure evidence that reaches the standard of "beyond a reasonable doubt" as is used in the criminal courts is ill advised, no matter how well intentioned. The duty of the director is to create a safe environment and make all efforts to prevent similar assaults. The legal obligation of all employers is to establish and maintain a workplace free of harassment. This is a vastly different duty as compared to ascertaining guilt or innocence.

A problem that naturally arises in situations of sexual assault is how to respond to the accused. How can a director act on an accusation of assault if he or she is not making a determination of guilt or innocence? Some assaults are particularly violent and/or occur in the presence of witnesses. Such physical harm of another camp participant is undoubtedly against your camp policy — this behavior is grounds for immediate termination even if the victim in the case declines police involvement. Most occurrences of assault that occur in camp though will be less obvious. Instead of a female presenting bruises and torn clothing, a more common case will present no evidence of physical harm. For example, a male and female staff member go to a bar on their night off and then return slightly intoxicated; the male in question begins to make sexual advances upon the female including groping her and using obscene language. She quickly leaves and reports the incident to her immediate supervisor.

The crux of the dilemma is how one is to weigh the welfare of the victim and ramifications for the camp's reputation against a wrongful termination. It is here that an investigation by the director will occur with the sole purpose of collecting information that will lead to creating a harassment-free environment. If the male in question is too much of a risk to the camp environment for future harassment, a decision to terminate may be made. Variables such as frequency of the act, severity of the act, and intentionally intended harm versus unintentional interactions all play a role in the decision to terminate, discipline, or do nothing. Incidentally, the victim in an incident does not have to be completely satisfied with the outcome of an investigation. If she seeks a decision of guilt and resulting punishment, this is the responsibility of the legal system. A camp director instead must be reasonable and effective in dealing with the alleged sexual assault. A decision on how successful a camp director is in his or her response to an accusation of assault is based on the reasonableness, effectiveness, and expediency of the investigation and intervention, not the complete satisfaction of the victim with the consequences for the offender. It certainly helps the process though if the victim is kept informed of the investigation and given an opportunity to offer an opinion on whether a proposed intervention will work.

A successful intervention simply needs to be one that stops future unwanted behaviors. An assault intervention can be approached as would most interpersonal problems at camp including remedies such as problem solving, education, consciousness-raising, and boundary setting. For the latter in particular, keep in mind that it has only been in the past fifty years that males and females have worked together. Males and females are still attempting to learn each other's boundaries. Sadly, society has offered few positive role models for males on respecting female boundaries.

4. Find legal counsel.

Each camp should have a legal representative. Refer questions to this person. Do not attempt to resolve these issues completely on your own. You want to be certain that a well-meaning intervention does not later turn into a legal problem. As more and more sexual harassment disputes are heard in the court, the laws for this area will become more refined. A director most certainly does not want to have his camp branded with a sexual harassment lawsuit.

**The Best Intervention Is Prevention**

The best intervention for sexual assault (as well as all harmful sexual activity) is prevention. A camp's response to a sexual assault should come as no surprise to camp staff. It is assumed that at this point all camps have formulated a sexual harassment policy that will specifically mention unwanted physical contact. In addition, staff should be informed in writing and during a staff-week orientation what specific procedure will occur if a sexual assault is reported. They should know the camp's stance on refusing to determine guilt, police involvement, and possible consequences. They should also know that the obligation of the director in such a case is to implement changes that would lead to a safer and harassment-free environment. This might or might not entail punishment for the offender, dependent on the details of the incident.

Another significant step to decrease the chances of a sexual assault is to monitor the use of alcohol. A significant minority of sexual assaults occurs while one or both parties are under the influence of alcohol. The ever-increasing use of random alcohol screening with invariant consequences for its use will go a long way in deterring such assaults.

Even with the best prevention plan, incidents will happen. Instead of reliance on the common responses of immediate termination of the accused or minimal intervention in the incident, the director should undertake an investigation with the ultimate goal of increasing camp safety for all participants. And in the unlikely situation of an extremely violent assault, it is reassuring to know that the camp director does not need to have all of the answers.

**SAMPLE BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES**

Children’s behavior may have many roots. It is not expected that one week at summer camp will cure all behavioral problems. As a counselor, understand that children bring their past with them in their behavior. If you can determine the root of the behavioral problem, it will give you clues on how to deal with it.

**Two things to keep in mind:**

1. Your campers are not mini-adults. Expect them to want to have fun and be active.

2. Expect your campers to test their limits; they still, however, want and need limits.

**Common reasons for surface behavior problems:**

1. A desire for recognition/attention; it may be better to be infamous than unknown.

2. Frustration; unsatisfied needs or desires often cause children to “lash out”.

3. Homesickness; being scared and nervous often causes frustration.

4. Illness/exhaustion; no one is at their best when they are sick or tired.

5. Conflict with another camper/staff member; this often causes people to become defensive.

6. Outside conflicts; problems with family, friends, etc. can follow campers to camp.

7. Established behavior patterns; lessons learned at home won’t be forgotten at camp.

**Some ways to provide structure without having to become a drill sergeant:**

1. Establish clear expectations right away.

2. Balance structure with a reasonable amount of freedom.

3. Reinforce and encourage desirable behaviors.

**Things to do about rule violations or refusal to cooperate:**

1. Give camper one warning; make it clear that they have done wrong.

2. Give your camper a chance to explain; they may have a good reason.

3. Be consistent and impartial.

4. Stay cool and calm; keep strong emotions in check.

5. Avoid lecturing or embarrassing the camper; discipline in private if possible.

6. Stress that the behavior is the problem, not the camper’s personality. Help the camper to identify acceptable alternatives to the problem behavior.

7. Once the disciplinary time is over, accept the camper as a part of the group again.

8. Follow the camp behavior-management policies for continuing discipline problems.

**Time-Tested Strategies**

1. Be the kind of person you want your campers to become – obey the rules yourself!

2. Know as many campers as possible by name. Know something about them. Build relationships.

3. Be friendly. Always show interest in what individual campers are doing and their progress.

4. Remember that “one pat on the back is worth two slaps in the face.” Praise good qualities and actions.

5. Be sure that a sense of humor is extremely valuable. Use it frequently.

6. Maintain your poise at all times. Don’t let the campers “get to you.”

7. Never take misbehavior personally. It is a choice the camper is making.

8. Always remember that every child has needs; his behavior will give you clues as to what those needs are.

9. Keep in mind that misbehavior is seldom willful. Try to find the cause.

10. Try to see the camper’s side of the situation. Discuss it with them until you understand.

11. Distract, distract, distract! One of the best methods to control behavior is to keep them busy!

12. Show your disapproval of behavior through your speech, facial expression, and action.

13. Being close when you note a potential problem can keep it from actually occurring.

14. Enlist other leaders (peers or staff) to provide role models.

15. Allow natural consequences to occur if the results are NOT too severe.

16. Withholding privileges or taking away something a camper likes is usually effective.

17. Sending a child to “time out” allows time to cool down and think about behavior change.

18. Have a group meeting to discuss and resolve generalized problems.

19. Remain with your campers during meals and free time.

20. Avoid getting campers over-tired, keyed-up, or tense.

21. Be willing to admit when you’re wrong and ask for forgiveness.

Sometimes it is best to simply ignore behaviors, rather than reward or punish, which may actually provide attention to encourage the behavior. Ignoring behaviors usually works best for campers who seek attention by clowning around.

Sometimes, giving the child attention or affection, which has been lacking, may solve the problem. Giving the child some form of responsibility or encouraging a special interest or talent may result in improved behavior. Often the activity, if it is at his/her own physical, emotional, and intellectual level, is enough to correct the situation.

**The Bully or Show Off**

To deal with these children, you first need the child’s confidence in you as a leader. To do this, you should not be dominating, overly critical, or too demanding on the child’s performance. To maintain this child’s confidence, praise good behavior – instead of only criticizing bad behavior. Discuss with the child the rights of others and courtesies due them. Let him/her know others will be more accepting if this behavior is turned more positive. Demonstrate compromise in your actions for the child to learn.

In group activity make a special effort to place this child in competition with others of equal or greater strength and ability.

Essentially, the bully or show off requires understanding and patience combined with placement of the child in groups that lend to his/her development of leadership traits in honest competition with other children.

**Fighting**

Serious fighting often evolves from what starts out as just “fooling around.” Keep a close eye on such horseplay to keep it from getting out of hand. When a fight breaks out, separate the combatants AT ONCE. Let your voice show calm, mature authority. Attempt to give them time to cool down. Watch facial expressions to indicate less tension. Disallow any angry verbal exchanges, and physically remove combatants to a “safe distance” from each other if necessary.

Fights that involve serious contact (hitting, kicking, biting, punching) require both combatants to visit the nurse, who will check for bruising and internal injuries. An incident report should be completed.

Once combatants have regained composure, try one or more of the following:

1. Calmly discuss the situation separately with each individual. Emphasize resolving the problem, not placing blame. Aim for a mutual “shake hands and make up” plan.

2. Hold a face-to-face hearing where each participant describes his/her version without interruption from the other. Attempt to help each see the other side, then reconcile differences, make up, and forgive.

3. Allow the individuals to discuss the situation between them privately IF you are sure the anger has dissipated. You can help mediate if they wish.

4. Invoke a logical consequence if clear provocation can be established or if this is a repeat offense. (See the Camp Behavior Management Policy)

**Stealing**

Prevent stealing by establishing an atmosphere of trust within all members of the group. Discuss openly the need to respect each other’s property. Establish group rules as campers feel a need to protect individual’s property and define sanctions for rule infractions. Always discourage campers from leaving valuables out in the open unnecessarily. If stealing still occurs:

1. Give the offender opportunity to return the article anonymously, without punishment.

2. Be sure that you may need to play detective if the item is not returned and the offender is still not identified. Be cautious in seeking group cooperation in order to avoid the offender being ostracized.

3. If you have evidence to identify an offender, deal with the camper privately. Give him/her a chance to make restitution and make a plan together to avoid repeat behaviors.

4. If evidence is lacking as to the offender’s identity, try handing out sheets of paper to each member of the group. Have them write either “I did not take it,” or “I did take it and I’m sorry,” and sign their name. Give them the opportunity to secretly place the papers in your custody. Deal with the offender privately at a later time.

5. If the problem persists, follow camp procedures and inform the camp director.

**Behavior Management Policy**

OUR CAMP advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention, and the development of self-discipline. Remind campers that camp rules are established for safety and to ensure that we have a common standard of behavior. As staff members, we need to show the campers that we see the need for following the rules ourselves. Please do not contradict the established guidelines!

Corrective discipline must be a creative, caring effort on the part of the counselor, and it must be seen as such by the camper. Always suggest positive alternatives to unacceptable behavior before it gets out of control.

1. Discuss rules with campers and identify out-of-bounds areas.

2. Discuss the possible consequences of breaking any rule:

• Quiet time

• Restriction from activity

• Restriction to adult supervision

• Extra duties

• Conference with director

• Conference with parent/director

• Removal from the camp

3. Enforce all rules at all times, without malice, and be consistent in application.

4. Inform the camp director of all disciplinary measures.

5. 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.

6. Conduct a periodic evaluation of the program/staff/camper groups to ensure that the camp environment is not contributing to behavior problems.

As an member of the **South Carolina Cadet Leadership Course** staff please sign below that you have been given this information pertaining to sexual assault, harassment and bullying as a requirement for working as a staff instructor or counselor.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sign Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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