

Lets get a list going of Jobs and what you need
Others may have to many staff or know of someone who may fit your needs

Camp name
Job needed to be filled
Male or female
location
Spring or summer
etc

Paul Schoen

Thanks did not know that

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

Camp Spindrift, Gloucester, MA
Junior or senior staff
Male and female
Summer
Day camp

Bethany Dietrich

Lutherwood, Washington
Counselors
MALE!!!
Summer

Emily Wood Ordway

CYO Camp / Counselor / Male & Female / Occidental, CA / Summer
<http://camp.cccyo.org/staff/>

Emily Wood Ordway

CYO Camp / Health Officer / Occidental, CA / Summer <http://camp.cccyo.org/staff/>

Caitlin Latta

There's a "Camp Jobs" group also

Tori Barnes

Girl Scouts of Northern California (Bothin, Skylark Ranch, Sugar Pine)
Waterfront Director, Riding Director, Lifeguards, female counselors, ropes staff, riding staff,
kitchen staff, EMT
Bay Area / Yosemite
Summer
<http://camprocks.submit4jobs.com>

Kerri Lyn

Wesley Forest Camp (Susquehanna UMC affiliate)
Counselors: female!!
Waterfront Lifeguard: male or female.
Central PA
Summer
<http://susumcamps.org/index.php/wesley-forest/leadershipwf>

Ellen Donohue-Saltman

Camp Encore/Coda: Girls Head Counselor/Group Leader

Kelly Ariel Yewer

Anyone open to hiring international staff for any of these positions please let me know and I would love to talk to you about the staff we can offer! :)

Kevin Saxton

2 Male Counselors . . . www.campjudson.com

Sarah Erickson

Camp Molly Lauman
Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland
-head lifeguard
-cook
-LPN/EMT

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Fernwood Cove, Maine
Program Coordinator (Summer Admin Position)
CIT Program Staff (female)
Ropes Course Facilitator
*all summer season

Becca Spitzig

The Center For Courageous Kids
Den Counselors
Male/Female
Scottsville Kentucky
Summer

Tony Sedgman

this group has both Camp Administrators seeing staff, and individuals seeking a camp position. Feel free to post your openings here....
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/373951909466490/>

Jennifer Ann Sweet

Hidden Valley 4-H camp, Watkins Glen, NY. Summer Resident Camp - Nurse: 21+, RN at the minimum. [Http:// cceschuyler.org](http://cceschuyler.org)

Jessica Stachulak

YMCA Camp MacLean Burlington, WI - Waterfront Director/ Teen Unit Director/ Male and Female Counselors
www.ymcacampmaclean.com or contact Jessica at jstachulak@ymcachicago.org

Allison East

Warner-Tully
Counselor (8+)
Male
Port Gibson, MS
Summer

We're open to international staff!

Jenna Johnson

YMCA Camp Greenville: Division 1 Leader, male counselors, and adventure camp staff.
South Carolina summer resident camp! <http://www.campgreenville.org/employment.php>

You can now get more value out of your camp's Instagram - show your followers how to turn on Post Notifications.

We seem to be down in registrations this year, what are some ways that you use to boost your registrations?

As a CampPro, what is the most beneficial professional development you have had?

Kelly Rossebo

BCDC (basic camp director's course)

Matt Buczek

I was sent on the road for 5 days during the summer by my exec to visit other camps in operation and take notes.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Being an ACA Standards visitor. It truly is a wonderful experience to be paired with another camp professional to visit a camp. You learn about different ways to meet standards, view different ways to do just about anything on camp. It's amazing how much I learn every single time I visit a camp. I STRONGLY recommend becoming an ACA visitor volunteer.

Jack Harvey

I'd say visiting with other camp folks, whether it's at their camp, your camp or at conferences.

David Allen-Hughes

Disney institute customer service

Sarah Erickson

Visiting other camps and seeing them in action is easily the best thing I've done.

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Directors Camp with Steve McGuire, Chris Thurber, and Scott Arizala

Travis Allison

I'm with Sarah & Sarah - Standards visits are what inspired me to make a life of this job.

Joe Richards

Touring other camps. I did it in Australia. I am just finishing 4 days of tours in Arkansas. Just talking to camp people and seeing their camps are amazing. Better for me when it is not a standards visit as everyone is more relaxed.

Male camp counselors = the struggle is real!

Erin Aschenbrenner- Flores

Amen.

Chris Kaake

#truth

Adrienne Sipkovsky

Yep.

Gay Hopson Bruner

Agree

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Fact. I think we've managed to find/retain five males? We are a coed day camp and have a staff of more than 60.

Caleb Seney

I am turning down solid female applicants left and right because I have so many stellar candidates. I can't get a dude to even apply!

Chris Kaake

^ Exactly! We have...one. One confirmed male counselor for the summer. We had three, but two of them have un-confirmed themselves, and they were my returns!

Nigel Cottreau

Amen.

Caleb Seney

Crazy!!!

Katrina Zettlemoyer Moncrieffe

Agreed a good way we have found some was to ask our hired staff to invite their other male friends to apply. Good people hang out together and it's helped us to get enough in our residential camp.

Chris Kaake

^That has worked well for us in the last as well. I even offered a headhunter bonus one year! It was only \$25 but the staff was pretty stoked about it.

Caleb Seney

We are on it!!! I am hoping the tide shifts in the next week as we have offered the same and have challenged our current staff to recruit. We pay well. The commitment level leaves room for other summer obligations, there co workers are the best and the brightest around. It should not be this hard.

Jessica Heely Huennekens

We have done something similar, but we are just in one of those years where a lot of our returning staff are aging out and graduated (now with full time jobs) or had to take internships for their college programs.

Tom Shneer

Isn't the best way to ensure you have male camp counselors is to have male cits? And the best way to ensure you have male cits and is to have male campers that love the camp. So really it starts with male campers, make sure they appreciate the camp for all it represents.

Ryan Moore

I know this seems crazy, and it's the first time its happened, but I'm the opposite this year. A lot of returning boys, and a good many females aging out, but no new applicants. It's so weird. Anybody in the TN area have girls looking for camps to work at?

Dick Thomas

It may be late, but also encourage applicants to look in to college credit / internships - where you will work with their respective schools, offer support, feedback, etc. in turn for credit.

Caleb Seney

Tom we are a camp for children with special needs in a majority of instances employing our campers would not be appropriate.

Steph Abbot

Ryan if you are looking for great international female/male staff then check out wildpacks.com

Grego Dow

Just hired my last one (fingers crossed)...but guys are usually slower to apply to camp jobs so don't lose hope yet. ;)

Tom Shneer

Caleb, that certainly complicates matters. You have my utmost respect for running such a camp! Please keep the struggle!

Ryan Hove

Check out www.campusjob.com. I have had some success on it.

Ryan Moore

Thanks for the help, guys.

Bill Joe Averitt

We offer \$100 referral bonus for every male hired. Even hired counselors are struggling to earn that bonus!

Daniel Powell

woooooow. clearly i'm not the only one. this is a very encouraging thread.

Matt Buczek

Weve got 6 left waiting to be placed :)

Hi everyone Kam here from South Mountain YMCA. We're in the process of looking to rent two 15 passenger vans for the summer. Is there a vendor that has good prices in the Pennsylvania area? Any

suggestions would be welcome.

Dan Lichtenstein

We've had great luck with Fleet Solutions. They're not locally based but you can get your vans delivered to the closest Ford dealer. Vans are fresh off the assembly line as well. To be honest, it may be difficult to get vans from them this late in the season, but if so, I'd recommend them.

Jackson Patterson

We rent the same. Keith VanDerzee handles our rentals. He might be able to share our van renter.

Kam Kobeissi

Great does Fleet Solutions have a phone number?

Dan Lichtenstein

We work with Kevin Conley at Merchants Fleet Solutions. Again, we've only worked with them for a year (going on our 2nd summer), but I do recommend them. Prices have been equivalent or less than I've seen elsewhere. Our vans have actually already been delivered to the local Ford dealer for the current summer...kind of crazy. Here is the contact info for Kevin:

Office: 603-606-4598

Cell: 603-660-3546

Fax: 603-695-9204

Email: kevinconley@merchantsauto.com

Kam Kobeissi

Thank for the info Dan

Rosemary Pezzuto

Make sure you check you insurance. Some are banning 15 passenger vans for transporting youth

Todd Robbins

I want to rent the van in the picture...

Paul Bryant

My advice, don't. The stats are bad on 15 passenger vans. If you are going over 45 mph and have a tire go = 100% chance of flipping over. If, at moderate highway speeds, your tires go off the road on one side of the vehicle and onto the berm and you overcorrect to get them out of the berm (very easy to do) then you are rolling the vehicle over almost every time. They are top heavy and your staff who are used to driving Honda Civics will be ill prepared to handle a 15 passenger beast. They are death traps. Our insurance bans us from using and after seeing the stats on them, I am glad they do. My advice - shift the liability by hiring buses for the bigger one time or once in a while trips. The people who drive buses are professional big vehicle drivers. Next, if you do a lot of driving as we do at our camp, we rent mini vans. Most of your staff at one time or another drove the "mom-van" in their lifetime - probably took their driver's test in it. Most minis are 7 passenger (driver plus 6) BUT you can get Toyota Sienna and Kia mini vans which are 8 passenger from your local (or semi-local) rental car company like Hertz, Avis and Enterprise. It may cost more per person to transport via mini van, probably not in gas but in personnel (the extra driver), but you'll feel better knowing your campers are in a much, much safer vehicle being driven

by your young staff who have probably spent some time behind the wheels of a mini. Also 15 pass vans often require a different license in some states than mini vans.

Kam Kobeissi

Thanks for the advise Paul! I'll look into it.

Dan Lichtenstein

Paul, there certainly are some concerns about 15 passenger vans, but your post was at a minimum, an oversimplification of things and really not totally accurate. 15 passenger vans have gotten significantly safer over time. The vast majority of 15 passenger van accidents were in the older Ford E350s. The E350 had wheelbase issues improved over time and the E350 has now been replaced by the Ford Transit. Yes, there are extra precautions that need to be taken into account, but with proper safety training, 15 passenger vans are an effective and safe way to transport campers and staff.

Alec Baden

To save money we lease busses and hire drivers separately for our summer programs, its far less expensive than simply using a transportation service. There are plenty of school bus drivers out there looking for work in the summer.

Kevin Saxton

I know that our insurance doesn't cover 15 passenger vans . . . you should definitely check with your insurance provider.

Paul Bryant

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/five-dead-six-injured-in-crash-of--passenger-van/article_d38efefc-fcfc-5c35-b69c-13649e779bdf.html

Paul Bryant

<http://www.safetyresearch.net/blog/articles/nhtsa-issues-eighth-consumer-advisory-about-dangers-15-passenger-vans>

Paul Bryant

Lastly, from a FAQ page at PENNDOT: "Pennsylvania Law prohibits the use of the 11-15 passenger vans for the transportation of school students (unless it was a vehicle that was grandfathered)." Grandfathered as in "registered as a school bus in the state prior to 1993." I am sure I wouldn't want a van that old for my campers. Schools, according to PENNDOT are "defined by Pennsylvania regulation as an institution for the education or training of children.

This includes, but is not limited to kindergartens, rehabilitation centers, day care centers, Head Start centers, group day care homes, family day care homes and SUMMER CAMPS (emphasis mine)." Even if the 15 passenger Ford Transit van is considered safe to use by the folks at PENNDOT, you'll still need a Commercial Driver's license with endorsements. Any vehicle over 11 passengers requires the CDL. The relatively new Ford transit MAY be safer than the Econoline it replaced but then again, it's a lot newer and hasn't had a chance to rack up the accidents its predecessors had. I reiterate my, perhaps oversimplified, advice. That is, transfer liability to transport companies with appropriate vehicles and professional drivers when you can and rent vehicles your college age staff can handle when you can't. You don't have time to train your summer people how to safely drive a 15 passenger behemoth nor, I am sure to obtain a CDL for each driver. I am sure you have the time to teach a college kid to drive a mini van safely - it'll be a lot easier because the vehicle is easier to handle and more like the ones they drive everyday than any 15 passenger van will ever be.

Dan Lichtenstein

Paul, I don't think anyone would argue that there haven't been high profile accidents with 15 passenger vans and that there aren't safety considerations. There are safety considerations for every vehicle we all drive, and extra precautions are necessary for larger vehicles. Again, these vans have gotten safer with improvements to wheel base and axle locations on vans. If they're not right for your camp, thats fine, but for many camps and organizations, they are an effective and safe method of transportation.

Bob Braun

Dan - I wholeheartedly agree! Driver maturity, skill level and training are key!

Rosemary Pezzuto

Also check your state laws. Here you would need a CDL FOR over 12. New last year

What country can i tie a petting zoo to?

Dusti Mahoney

if you have a llama/alpaca there then Peru.... tell a story about how Toby the Llama brought all his other friends to visit too.

Catherine Gorecki

Make it a World Menagerie. Animals from everywhere.

Robert Lawton

Sheep - Australia
Nervous sheep - New Zealand

Ettie Cohen

I'm bringing it in the week we are doing the us any ideas?

Dusti Mahoney

back to the farn

Robert Lawton

Chickens - France
Guinea Pigs - Peru
Cows - Texas
Bulls - Chicago
Yeti - Tibet

Rosemary Pezzuto

Around the world with baby animals

We're in Seattle, and just had an inquiry from some Canadian campers. Is anyone else near a border and have campers come from outside the US? I have questions about visas and about healthcare. Would Canadian campers need a visa or would camp just count as a vacation? Would they be covered by Canada if they had to go to the doctor or clinic or ER for any reason? Hopefully someone can help! Thanks, Alex

Laura Polis

we host about 100 mexican campers over the duration of a summer, plus other countries that fly in. . .but we're in TX so mexico is our most popular. I believe they just come in on a tourist visa, if they are driven, the parents drop them off and keep their passports, if they fly, we do.

As far as healthcare goes, we require a credit card to use in case a Urgent Care or ER visit or prescriptions while camp are required. we contact the parents before we use it though, some kids have supplemental US insurance, but they usually have to apply for re-imbusement after the fact

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Canadian campers are relatively easy. My kids, who are Canadian citizens, travel with me to camp in Maine every summer and stay the entire summer season. And we have Canadian campers as well. No additional paperwork needed- they enter on a tourist visa, I would advise that they have a passport. I would advise them to get travel insurance, it's relatively cheap and would provide coverage in the event that there were any medical needs while the campers were in your care. We get our travel insurance through Blue Cross at the CAA office.

Casey Sukeforth

Our camp is on the NY / Canadian border and have many Canadian campers. They just come on a tourist visa. Most of ours do travel insurance, but not all.

Kathryn Kelly Luera

Hey Alex, we are located in Bellingham and have quite a few Canadian campers every year. It's never been an issue for us, I know most of our regulars have travel insurance and come on a tourist visa, BUT I don't think that they all do....

Hi all, my name is Bethany, and I am the program director at Lutherwood Camp and Retreat Center in Bellingham, Washington.

Caterina Kolkman Maw

Welcome

Alex Flannagan

Hi Bethany, I'm Alex and I'm about two hours away at Camp Huston in Gold Bar!

Bethany Dietrich

Thanks!

Kathryn Kelly Luera

Hey, I'm close by too! Camp Director at Camp Kirby on Samish Island (Bow, WA). :-)

Really in a blogging mood this week, guys! Here are my take-aways for #CampPros from Vape Bash 2015, the e-cigarette conference that happened at the same time and the same place as the ACA Mid-States Conference last week! Go figure.

Do you have an e-cigarette policy at your camp? I'd be curious to hear what it is.

<http://www.kurtzmckinnoncreative.com/blog/2015/4/22/nhr4fsnpsjipqaohzqgirsbx5ybibd>

Kelly Rossebo

Thanks! That was an insightful, educational and thought provoking blog!

Raya Irene Rose

great write up Sarah!

Sarah Kurtz McKinnon

Thanks, Raya Irene Rose! See you soon??

Bob Braun

Thanks for sharing your thoughts - it was an interesting juxtaposition happening at Pheasant Run. When unknowns appear, we do tend to 'circle the wagons' in the camping field, when it is probably more beneficial to reach beyond our comfort zones and biases to better educate ourselves!

Ephraim Shapiro

Ecigs are the new gateway drug. the stats are frightening.

Robert Lawton

Thinking as a parent (of two campers), if: my kids come home from camp having tried/wanted to get ecigs because a cabinmate or leader used and endorsed them... then: grrrrrrr

So no, I don't think ecigs at camp are a good idea.

Kelsey Weitzel

Thanks for the info!

Myself and coworker had an interaction with 2 of them while in the pool one of which who has a college student and asked us if our job was easy as long as we didn't hurt kids or anything. My thought was ugh

On the other hand, as well know some people had their kids in attendance and a Vape attendee stopped to play a game of checkers with the 8 year old I was helping to keep an eye on! She was really into it even when the kid decided to change the rules.

I had never thought about Vape policies it's good to have on the radar!

Andrea J Steffens

The one comment made to me was.....e-cigs never started a forest fire! LOL I just kept my mouth shut and smiled!

Ephraim Shapiro

Zero tolerance policy.

Dan Lichtenstein

One thing to know about ecigs and vapes is that they've become a popular way to smoke pot. They often do not create much if any smoke/odor and are often very potent.

Scotty Jackson

No smoking. Smoke on camp and Hollie Penueel and I fire you. No exceptions. Nice piece Sarah.

We are a small camp that relies on volunteers to fill the gap to staff our weeks. In the past, 7 - 9 years ago, we allowed 14 & 15 year olds to 'work' at camp. Over the past few years we have phased this out as we found that most of them are here to be here with their friends. And their parents or 'mentors' would come, but only to be here so their kid could be here. Our mission was not their focus.

What do some of you do with 14 and 15 year olds that don't want to be campers anymore, but are not old enough to work?

Nathan J Welton

Dishwashing crew. Garbage. Landscaping.

Dick Thomas

Give them healthy doses of challenge, responsibility, and leadership - via trips (camping, wilderness if you can), a leadership/counselor-training program (build your future staff), and/or other in-camp work/chores/special projects - but be sure they know they are appreciated/needed, not just dealt with the grunt work....

Shawn Moriarty

Teen Leaders 15-16, CIT 16-17.

Victoria Hoppes

We have Junior Counselors. Normally they are age 16/17, but occasionally we will hire someone who is 15. We'll only do that if we really know the person and what they can handle. Our Junior Counselors go through similar training as our Counselors, and are an integral part of our day camp teams. They typically assist with set up/clean up, camp logistics, etc.

Victoria Hoppes

We've also given them "projects" to work on during the summer that benefit the camp program. Last year we had two young men who were really into science, and they planned and led all the science activities. They were shining stars!

Dan Lichtenstein

We thank them for their years at camp and tell them that when they're old enough to be CITs (16), that we hope they'll apply. If they don't want to be campers, then maybe its time for them to move on. Having them there for the sake of having them there can create some negative cultures.

Rosemary Pezzuto

We have CILT'S Campers in leadership training. They learn leadership, are campers, and have special challenges.

Caterina Kolkman Maw

We only do 15 year olds for life guards. They have to be almost 16 though. Otherwise you have to be 16 to work asst jobs. (Asst councillor, asst crafts, etc)

David Richard Butts

Kids that age need leadership opportunities and appreciation. Both of which we can provide in abundance.

Matthew Cunningham

You can do a LIT program with them so it's basically kinda like CIT but for 14-15 year olds

Well it's that season again, the "I've changed my mind about working for you" season. Good luck everyone...lost 3 this week myself. Sigh...

Mike Moose Greenfield

Sorry Greg, I understand your pain

Nathan J Welton

Probably for the best. You don't want staff without the character to fulfill an adult commitment.

Grego Dow

True that!

Robert Lawton

Any ideas on what percentage of staff who have accepted an offer end up bowing out? Likewise, it's it typically to extend offers to a couple of extra qualified candidates to help cover the bases?

Wade Nyhuis

I'm sorry to hear that Greg. I'm curious, do you have them sign anything after accepting the job? I haven't had to deal with that after they send in their agreement, but then again I only hire 10 to 15 staff a summer.

Megan Gibb

I haven't had any staff back out yet (knock on wood), but I've received 4 emails in the past week from people who have signed contracts saying, "Oh, by the way, I'm going to need an entire week off in the middle of the 8 week summer for (a mission trip/grandma's birthday across the country/volunteering at another camp/insert other excuse here that they've known about for months)." They never mention it in the "request time off" section of the application, of course!

Carrie Kishline Lawson

We hire 100 staff and have 2-3 back out every year, so we do hire a couple of extra beyond what we need.

Mc Loud

"I bought tickets for a week long music festival and need this week off"

Mc Loud

Not only can you have that week off, you can have all the other weeks off too!

Elisa DayCamp

I'm glad its not just me!

Kim Steward Betts

We hire 200 each summer and always lose some. So frustrating!

Hannah Hudson

^had a guy last summer say, " I need a week and a half off to attend a Music Festival. I only took this job to pay for my ticket. ::facepalm::

Gay Hopson Bruner

2 down here this week. ugh!

Lisa-Beth Sanford

Love it when they come back 1 week before camp starts and ask for their job back.

Robert Lawton

Just a thought - and I have no experience as a director - but do any of you request and confirm parent's contact information? I'm wondering if the threat of having to answer to mom or dad might have some positive effect on behavior.

Dan Lichtenstein

Robert, we intentionally do not want the parents involved. This is more of an issue with our JCs/CITs but we very clearly say that they work for us, not their parents, and we will not be communicating with their mom or dad. I understand your point, but I think that involving the parents makes this less of a job to them.

Whitney Ewing Kahn

Rebecca Velasquez- we are in good company!

Grego Dow

Wade Nyhuis...Yup...they all receive a contract to sign...but there's nothing you can really do if they choose not follow through on the contract. And as Nathan J Welton mentioned...probably don't want them on staff if they aren't able to keep commitments they make.

Jenn Becker Carpenter

It makes me crazy!!

Kris Ebner Martin

Just 1 so far here!

Diane Tyrrell

right there with you....frustrating but a sad reality....

Paul Sheridan

The worst!

Scotty Jackson

It's fine. You didn't want those staff members, anyhow. There are a few recent grads that hadn't even considered a summer job, yet, and have no where to live come June, available now. Or we are close to getting the long-time staff, that weren't able to find a "real job", yet.

Emily Glass

Indeed, no fun at all! We lost a valuable sailing trip leader to last minute internship a few weeks ago. We try to overstaff by a few to soften the blow if/when we lose folks late in the game.

Alexa Rae Geider

As frustrating as this may be, I think it's really important to consider why some may have to back out: financial reasons are huge. Many college students take on an insane amount of debt and sometimes we have to make hard decisions to pay these and other expenses off. Often times that means not working at camp. To back out without a sincere apology should be embarrassing for that person, but admin should plan for at least a couple staff to be unable to maintain a commitment due to unforeseen circumstances.

I am looking for a video (or at least lyrics) for the 'AWARDS!' song. At the end of each camp day the whole camp circles up and we sing 'Awards(X5) Hey!, Everyone loves awards...'

Then each counselor comes forward and gives a nametag-sticker-award to 2 kids in their group for a special achievement for that day.

Too bad, I didn't take video of this song and the staff member who brought the song is MIA. Can anyone help? (It's not on 'Ultimate Camp Resource'.)

Thanks!

Ettie Cohen

Would love to hear more songs camps sing as part of their routine

Messody Ezagui

Following

Dawn Marie

Following

Cesar Silva

I think the more resources for camp songs especially newer ones ... the better!!!

Katie Adrian

It sounds like a slight edit to the announcements song! Here's a video I found. Although I have never sung the third part!

<http://youtu.be/bHM4m5ur18c>

For all those who don't think your staff can 'ever put their cell phones away while at camp', (to quote some of my clients) please take five minutes and watch this video. The longer you watch, the more AMAZING it is. The show is being filmed at the UNC Chapel Hill campus prior to the Duke game this year. Feel free to watch for content, but it's NOT ABOUT THE CONTENT. I'd love for you to watch the AUDIENCE as long and as much as you can. I have started using this in my camp trainings. You can assume the majority of the audience are UNC students (18-22 years olds, just like a lot of our camp staff.) The longer you watch, the more you will notice that NOT ONE PERSON IN THE 18-22 year old audience is on their phone. In fact, I watched the whole show and no one was on their phone. So, I contacted ESPN and found out that they (ESPN) are completely transparent with the audience. They tell them, that if they (they live student studio audience) spend time on their phone while the show is on, they will politely be asked to leave the audience. They want a live audience that is being respectful to the hosts as well as the live TV viewing audience. They want an engaged audience. Hmmmm... very interesting... sounds like a lot of camp directors/parents/professionals I work with. They want their staff to be respectful and engaged (and a lot of other things :) while working with kids. Please use some of this with your staff... it's super eye opening and can show some of them that "yes, the world will still exist if you are not on your phone" :) and 'YOU CAN DO IT. YOU CAN ACTUALLY GO A CERTAIN

AMOUNT OF TIME WITHOUT YOUR PHONE' :)

PS: THE SHOUTING IS MY ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS TOPIC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d45LVLggx3k>

Angela Monn

Tim Wolff.

Bryce Fairburn

Tim Good

How do you handle immunization records for repeat campers?

Do you allow campers to attend your camp who have no proof of immunization?

Bill Waite

In NY as my regional DOH explains it, It is more important to know who is not immunized, so if there is a breakout, you can rapidly contact the parents of the kids not protected. Sometimes parents drop the ball on that piece of the paperwork and its just a matter of asking for it once they are here. More percisely, if a parent drops off the kid and is told they need that, typically I put on a sense of urgency about it and the parents hustle it up the next day faxed from the doctor. It might be a bit of acting on my behalf, but good parents put on the hustle.

Bill Waite

In addition, some of our campers are truly last minute registrants, and you don't want to turn a kid away from camp just because of paperwork that could be handle once they are here.

Colin Stewart

If, however, they are not vaccinated that is something worth considering. We are investigating requiring all children to be vaccinated unless their doctor says they can't. An outbreak of a highly contagious disease (but ultimately preventable) at camp would benefit nobody. And the media would have a field day!

Bill Waite

my camp is only 5 days long, so by the time symptoms occur, kids would already be gone.

Bill Waite

longer term camps probably should be more heavy handed about it.

Dan Lichtenstein

This is for ACA camps, but they have added to the standards on this issue. from HW.5. This is a mandatory standard new for 2015:

D. A statement from the custodial parent/guardian attesting that all immunizations required for school are up to date and including the actual date (month/year) of last tetanus shot (A physician statement, a government immunization record, or a school immunization record is also acceptable. The date of the last tetanus immunization is required.);

So my reading of this is that not only do you need written documentation of immunizations, they need to be vaccinated in accordance with their local schools. They are allowed to submit a waiver for "religious and other" reasons.

Colin Stewart

Homeschool, Dan Lichtenstein? Any ideas?

Andrea Suzanne

Thanks for this input. Dan, that is the exact policy we follow. I should have added more specifics to my question because I was referring just to repeat campers. Many parents register via paper and will tell us we have the information "on file from last year" when in reality after each year their information gets archived and locked away. I feel like I explain this over and over to the parents but it feels like pulling teeth.

Dan Lichtenstein

Colin, I'd likely just defer to the policy of the local school district. Andrea, I'd think that you could tell them that the standards require updated paperwork every year.

Alex Flannagan

Dan, yeah it says right there underneath in the APG:

NOTE: If camps have minors who do not have immunizations, for religious or other reasons, a "record" can be a signed refusal or a signed waiver form.

So the conclusion I draw, and focussing on "repeat campers" is that each year we have everyone fill in a health form. We have a yes/no checkbox for "All immunizations required for school are up to date", and "Date of last tetanus booster shot". You can see it here: <http://houston.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Health-Form.pdf>

Hope that helps

Lori Rosene

The only date required by ACA is for the tetnus.

Emily Galbraith

Does anyone have a form or waiver wording for non-vaxxed kids?

Good afternoon :) Jeremy is absolutely amazing... He's a tad out of everyone's range for a camp training (45K a Keynote, public knowledge, I'm not giving away trade secrets) However, the CONTENT of his website and from the branch of what he owns trendhunter.com is AMAZING... Just different ways to 'look at things' that I think if you threw this at your 'creative types' at camp, could make some amazing evening/day programs. The :35 minute video on his homepage is a MUST Enjoy! Word.

<http://www.jeremygutsche.com/>

Curt Jackson

Love it! Thanks for sharing, Stephen. Really enjoyed the Red Bull story.

Colin Stewart

45k? I think I'll book him for training AND midsummer slump.

Anyone ever tried this? I can't wait to test it out.

Emma Gifford

The camp I work at tried this and it works pretty well. You can also blow the bubbles and when they land they leave little glowing solution behind. We had a fairy night and the marks left behind were fairy footprints.

Tim Wolff

It doesn't work as well as you'd imagine though. the entire bubble doesn't glow, just the liquid that pools at the bottom of the bubble does. Though when it pops, glow liquid does shoot everywhere.

Craig J Gibbs

I'm not sure if you US uses the same solution as the UK glowsticks as I thought the was poisonous.

Ephraim Shapiro

Yes i have done this with a variant. I have a couple of cheap bubble guns/blowers and wanted to have glow in the dark bubbles for rave type party with a blacklight - I ordered a small concoction online and after mixing the 'solution" and testing it i realized what it was. For the party i used regular bubbles in a bubble machine and cracked open 2 highlighter pens and squeeze/wrung out the inserts into the solution.

Ephraim Shapiro

(though not so sure i would try it with glow stick fluid as it may be toxic -or at least not something worth floating in the air at camp like ours)

The STS Foundation is looking to place international high school students with a family for a semester or entire 2015-2016 academic school year. Hosting a student is a wonderful opportunity to learn about new cultures and ways of life, develop wonderful lifelong friendships, and increase your global awareness.

Our students originate from many countries in Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and New Zealand. They are male and female between the ages of 15-18.5 and are very excited to experience our culture and way of life. Below are just a few of the many students available for placement.

Marika is a 17 year old girl from Finland who will be studying here for a semester. She loves trying new things and meeting new people. Some of her interests include reading, sports, and music.

Andres is 17 and from Spain. As an extrovert, he loves new experiences and joining new groups. He loves to make people laugh. He enjoys sports, photography, and traveling.

Giulia is 17 and from Italy. She is an open minded young lady who loves acting and going to the cinema. She is athletic and loves meeting new people.

Teagan is a 16 year old from New Zealand. She is humorous, practical, and determined. Her interests include karate, baking, and babysitting young children.

If you are interested in hosting, please PM me for more information. I would love the opportunity to advance through this process with you as it is truly rewarding for all involved for many years to come!

Recovering from surgery, hearing that everyone needs guy counsellors, thought I'd do some recruiting. How much bounty are u willing to pay per head? Fair details can be worked out.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

We offer free parking!

Bill Joe Averitt

Andy, taking up your offer. Messaged you details! :-)

Katherine Parnell

We have free laundry and room & board even on session breaks!

Nathan J Welton

All you can eat grilled cheese!

Andy Rosenhauch

So, Sarah Jacobs - if I find u a guy counselor, I can park my rv at tour camp year round? And Nathan do I get the sandwiches in one lump sum or over 20 years? Anybody giving referral bonuses in \$?

Nathan J Welton

One lump sum and it must be in one sitting.

Andy Rosenhauch

I will never leave the table - please say it comes with tomato soup

Robert Lawton

... and bread.

Think kids might enjoy doing this?

Chris Dewberry Shifflett

Ana Baggiano

Jana Sloupova

Perfect. They will love it :))

Kimberly Elizabeth

Kate Hamilton

Heidi Mabie

Claude Gonzales a new beach party activity!!

David Allen-Hughes

There's more fun ideas too....<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nv5T7Sw-UBw> and then this could be a fun setup if you have an extra cabin you never use...
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE9BxIALWDs>

Scott Zehr

Laura Snyder

Susan Sunni Richardson

Love this idea --

Mary-Lynne Howell

To much fun!!!!

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Hillary Dave

Kim Hake

I love this! Maybe I can work it in this year... Hmm

Ymca Camp Discovery

love this IDEA!!!!

We started having color runs at many of our camps last summer and the kids love it. We have ordered the colored powder from several different vendors. Do you recommend a specific vendor for the colored powder? Thank you!

Shawn Moriarty

curious for info too.

Messody Ezagui

Chameleon colors was excellent!

Chelsey Land

We are going to conduct a color run as well during our color wars week. We will be making our own "powder" with cornstarch and either food coloring or washable water color (we haven't decided yet). There are many recipes on pinterest.com you can use. It might be cheaper and a fun way to incorporate an activity. :)

Jillian Davis

Kalleigh Norval ! Good to know :)

Colleen McGourley

I would love to know this also

Ange Atkinson

Hippie powder - all natural, affordable, and great customer service!

Ettie Cohen

Has anyone made any of the recipes and found them to work well?

Christopher Bullard

I've often heard of, but haven't experienced, serious hardships when it comes to making your own powder. When it is a vital part of a program activity, I wouldn't risk a homemade batch. I've also heard it takes a ton of time and effort which doesn't outweigh the costs.

Emma Gifford

Jessica Ruch and Michelle Balfe Keefer

Tara Bartlett Barker

Following

Dave Hennessey

Search the group... We talked about this about a month ago and several vendors were listed. Try searching "color war" "color fight" or "holi"

Stephanie Huber Williams

Following

Aimee Gigandet

We made it last year from a Pinterest recipe... They weren't as bright as I would of liked. Perhaps we didn't use enough color. Also we didn't make nearly enough although it felt like we did. We had 200 kids so we needed to make a lot. Yes, it was a bit time consuming. If I do it again - I may try purchasing it this year.

Meghan Noelle Coln

If you're going to be doing a color type event, I think it would be a great idea to acknowledge that it's inspired by the Hindu festival of Holi and to educate about that. Otherwise you're kinda just taking something sacred from another culture and using it for funsies :/

Aimee Gigandet

Thank you - I will definitely take that into consideration - most of my special events are usually wrapped into a theme or education of some sort. Last year we were doing invention and discovery week and we were teaching kids about the invention of technicolor. We started out with black and white and then entered the wizard of oz with color powder to help us. I love the Hindu festival idea!

Laura Jernigan

We made the powder last summer as well. And it was very time consuming. My return staff have already asked if we could purchase the powder this year.

Ange Atkinson

I want to share that we've done this for 2 years - not as a run but as a fun chaos color fight and the powder (even the natural stuff) can cause SERIOUS issues for asthmatics. I had to take a staff member to the hospital for a breathing emergency after our first time doing this, she has serious asthma so there were other factors as well. Now we give all campers bandanas to where over their faces and they love it. If you are doing this please ensure you keep an eye on anyone with asthma.

Anita Pizzutiello

Jell-O Wars are awesome fun! All staff & CIT's make at least one big box of jello in a plastic shoe box or whatever. Great photo opp, kids love it, safe, nothing to clean up on the grass. Spray everyone off with the hose when you're done!

Ange Atkinson

Anita Pizzutiello - you don't have ant problems when you do this?

Jim Owens

Following

Anita Pizzutiello

Ange Atkinson No problems with ants. We do it on a side field in the grass.

Where are folks buying the best and least expensive arrows for this summer?

Shawn Moriarty

I have used Halls Arrows in CT for years. Decent prices for a gross of arrows.
<http://www.hallsarrow.com/>

Laura Fuese Hall

Another vote for Hall's Arrows (no relation) :)

Zack Bear

Same.

Mike Stillson

I ordered from Kinsey's Outdoors this year.

Adrienne Sipkovsky

Hall's!

Paul Bryant

Hall's (not the mentholypus the archery guy in CT)

Alexander Barge

Whitney Civitts

48 Hour Deal: Bark Lake Leadership is offering \$50 off our June 5-9th ACCT Level 1 High Ropes Course. The price is now \$840.00 (tax incl.). This course is being offered in partnership with Adventureworks! This deal will run until Friday April 24th, 12 noon. To book your spot please call Karen at Bark Lake @ 705.447.2447 ext: 227.
<http://barklake.com/news-ev/rope-course-instructor-courses/>

If anyone is looking for archery training for the summer, NASP (National Archery in the Schools) offers trainings nationwide. We have been a host site for the past few years and the trainer has been great. Here is the link to find a class in your area:
<http://www.naspbai.org/Classsearch.aspx>

We had our group interviews this past weekend for day camp counselors, and wow! We are SO lucky to have so many awesome candidates for the next round of interviews! I have my first individual interviews tomorrow, but I was wondering if any of you day camp pros have anything you like to ask in interviews to get to know your potential staff member. Thanks!!

Kelly Rossebo

I like to ask them to describe their family. Many of us learn to parent from our parents and I believe it gives you insight to their potential "parenting" style and experiences.

Alissa Sperling

We love giving situational questions with no clear "right answer." We look for the ability to reason through their answer (ex: "a camper refused a meal even though you told them there would be no chance for food later. now it's late and they're hungry and crying, what do you do as their counselor?").
Also, asking someone to describe their family gets you into sticky legal territory and opens you up EEOC issues....

Dumb question im sure but can someone walk me through the proper way to do a color run please?

Mike Moose Greenfield

I've never done one and would also like to know.

Camp Gallahue

I want to know too :)

Ephraim Shapiro

Google

Erin Furze

What I did to create the color was purchase Tempera Paint Powder, and then mixed it with cornstarch. (I found the recipe on pinterest) I made the colors in buckets. I had the counselors line up along the road and throw the color at the campers as they walked/jumped/skipped/ran/rolled by. I only used about 3 or 4 colors, but I combined the color run with a mud run and warrior dash.

Ettie Cohen

Ephraim Shapiro i did and found lots of pics but no actual walk through

Messody Ezagui

Erin how did you clean up when it was combined with mud? We've used the color powder as part of a concert. Just by blowing out powder at random times throughout the night while everyone was singing and dancing

Cesar Silva

I have looked into this... my concern was the paint in the eyes... sooo goggles? glasses?

Messody Ezagui

Cesar We gave out sunglasses that we ordered online. We only used the color powder- no paint.

Kevin O'Sullivan

We use flour. Eyes have never been a problem since it doesn't 'run' down your face.

Ettie Cohen

Messody Ezagui where did u get glasses from? Can someone actually just tell me what u r supposed to do while kids run , with the powder

Sarah Erickson

My biggest concern is with breathing the powder. Does anyone know if this poses a problem? I imagine it would be a trigger for asthmatics.

Helene Sircus Behar

I just ordered color powder for our color war break out. Not sure if I ordered enough, but it cost about \$100. They promised it does not stain skin or clothes!

Christopher Bullard

Ettie Cohen while kids are running or going through activities they get doused in the powder. They usually need to be a little sweaty for it to stick well.

Anyone have any experience with clean up? We don't have outdoor showers, but we do have some hoses. I don't want the cabins to get disgusting from the powder, and I don't want any drains to get clogged. Jumping in the pool or pond is also out. Any thoughts?

Erin Furze

Messody Ezagui, we ended our run with the campers playing on the slip'n'slide and playing in the sprinklers. We used kiddie pools to contain all of the mud, and were able to throw water on the section of road where all of the color was.

Messody Ezagui

Ettie Cohen we ordered it from amazon. Christopher you have to try to get as much as you can off before going into the shower. We used a leaf blower to blow the kids off. The rest came off in the shower/wash

Sandy Laing

Following

Kate Tucci

I ran in a color run just to see how it worked! What I really liked was how they threw it on us- they used squeezey condiment bottles with a deep cut at the tip- that way, it was a more controlled delivery. At the end we were given packets to be thrown at a certain time. (You can see that on my cover photo!) This would work as well with prefilled cups! You do have to hold your breath if you don't want to breathe it in- offer bandanas for kids with asthma! The leaf blower totally works to blow off excess color!

Jessica Booth

Like this!

Ettie Cohen

How does prefilled cups work?

Kate Tucci

Give cups of powder to the kids at the end of the run and do a countdown and have everyone throw the powder from their cups in the air at the same time. It's cool til the colors mix so time the picture perfectly!

Ettie Cohen

Cool! Thanks

Mandy Whaler

Messody, where did you order your powder from?

Messody Ezagui

Mandy Whaler we ordered from chameleon colors

Mandy Whaler

Thanks!

Adrienne Sipkovsky

Ha! I was just wondering myself!

Ready-for-camp Giant bowling ball set on Groupon...doubt it will last the season but certainly could make some fun!

Ian Brooks

Leslie Manning

Jonah Wagan

Toni Davison Levenberg could prob use a new one

Heidi Mabie

Scott Mabie

Leslie Manning

Ian Brooks I was actually about to text you about this earlier!! And they don't ship to Canada !!!!

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Hillary OMG!

Jon Shelson

Kathy Fleming

Kim Woodeden

Barbara Gray PLEASE!!!

Jerrold Henoch

That picture angle sure makes that 18 inch ball look huge. Since they don't ship to canada going to have to think about crafting one. Large yoga/exercise ball and what is around camp to use as the pins? Hmmm

Janaea Guterding

Sarah Hartley?!?!?

Sarah Hartley

Oh my gosh!!! I saw this and thought how could we make one?!? Sylc Olympics!!!

Summer waterfront coordinator position available, if you or anyone you know has experience working on or running camp waterfronts and would like to work in Washington state this summer please inbox me for more details.

Elizabeth Sreniawski

I can testify that this camp is amazing! An amazing place to work, develop skills and meet incredible people/campers.

Molly Poole

I can also second! This camp is incredible

Dusti Mahoney

Uhm..... what camp?

Kate Taylor

Camp Sealth on Vashon Island. Beautiful beach on the Puget Sound!

I am looking for a some SUPER garden curriculum to purchase to integrate into our Day and Resident Camp programs. There is SO much out there, any suggestions?

Chris Smith

Would also be interested.

Hannah Hudson

Melinda Rabbitt DeFeo is an authority on garden curriculum!

Carly Robinson

we got a ton of great resources FREE from the USDA - "The Great Garden Detective"

Cindy Ann Lee

Also check your local extension office or if you have any botanical gardens in your area, a wealth of information!

Scottie Roach

Call Danny Sudemon at Green Camps Initiative

Jess Williams

Tara Laidlaw

Rosemary Pezzuto

<http://growtolearn.org/view/RC5169> <http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/lkids.html>

Rosemary Pezzuto

There are many free curriculums for kids in different ages on the webpages from the government. Some have fun handouts etc.

Rosemary Pezzuto

<http://www.kidsgardening.org/school-gardening>

Rosemary Pezzuto

This is a great curriculum that is free, has handouts and you can print to your computer . WE are using it in our program and connect it to our CSI weeks at camp.
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/great-garden-detective>

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Messody Ezagui

Brocha Ezagui-Benhiyoun check this out for the preschool kids

We are a girls' uniform camp (forest/hunter green shorts; white shirts). This year we are offering a rookie camp option for younger girls (1st - 3rd grades) who will also need to be in uniform. We often find it difficult to recommend locations to purchase uniform clothing in the small sizes. Does anyone have stores, websites, etc. that they recommend to parents, particularly for small sizes? In the US please.

Mandy Whaler

Lands End has a selection of uniforms. I also think even Wal-Mart has a uniform section online.

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Mandy Whaler- thanks so much. I didn't know that Land's End has a "little girls" size range!

Rosemary Pezzuto

There are a number of Catholic school uniform companies that have preschool through high schools sizes. Where are you located. Many are mail order

Alicia DeHart Theriault

We are in Maine, but our families come from all over the U.S.

Rosemary Pezzuto

I will get my lost of mail order and post it

Rosemary Pezzuto

Some give a kickback.

Rosemary Pezzuto

Flynn and O'HARA out of phili. Dennis in the west, are two I have worked with. They do mail order and have store fronts.

Liz Tully

Don't know if it will work but Children's Place also has a uniform line

What are your favorite messy games to play with campers?

Rick Meyering

Potato Roundup - Counselors carve their own emblem in a 1/2 of a soaked potato, choose a color of paint and tag kids to put your mark on either cheek or forehead. Several rounds, old tees, great times. Losing counselors get dumped on in the end!

Rick Meyering

Kevin O'Sullivan

Color wars. We use powdered tempura paint mixed with flour. Make sure to rinse in a lake before going back to the pool.

Kris Ebner Martin

Steal the bacon!

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Color Wars is our biggest week! The kids LOVE it

Natasha Marie

Shaving cream fights or water fights!

Robert Lawton

This could get messy, but it looks beautiful:
<http://www.sunnyskyz.com/blog/803/She-Paints-Colorful-Dots-On-Ocean-Stones-The-Result-Is-Beautiful>

Camp Fire Green Country (Tulsa, OK) is looking for amazing camp staff for this summer - please help by SHARING this! TIA

Rosemary Pezzuto

Send me the. Flier to share

Sean Gundersen

Go Camp Fire!

Chris Thurber, Scott Arizala and I will be hosting our annual directors camp at Camp Wingate*Kirkland on Cape Cod in September. You can find more at the link below. It is a professional development event unlike anything available in the camp industry, that has been going strong for the last 5 years. This is year 6 and we have spots still open. There are plenty of alumni in this FB group that can attest to the professional development of this weekend. We look forward to seeing folks!

www.directorscamp.com

Alicia DeHart Theriault

This weekend is amazing!! Go.

Kristen Parkin

How far from the airport is this camp?

Stephen Maguire

:90 mins from Logan.

Kristen Parkin

Thanks

Register for this free ACA Endorsed Earth Day webinar to learn about water issues and the lessons you can share with your staff and campers!

If you are interested in joining a short-term (3 month) Mastermind group focussed on getting more campers to your camp this summer: <http://camphacker.tv/mastermind-groups-apply/>

Cost will be \$300

We'll have 2 Skype meetings/month

Starts first week of April.

Travis Allison

I have lots of #CampPros Masterminders if you'd like some references.

Travis Allison

Not sure what a Mastermind group is? <http://camphacker.tv/what-is-a-mastermind-group>

Dave Hennessey

Michael

Travis Allison

If you're stressing because you need more campers for this summer this group will be SOLID with great ideas!

Nathan Scott Brant

Amanda South Mountain Ymca or Kam Kobeissi?

Tink Rabey-Hall

Travis, what will the meetings look like, do you think?

Travis Allison

There will be a 40 min hot seat (every one gets 2 turns over the 3 months) a 10-15 minute lesson from me, followed by Q & A.

Joe Richards

Jessica Tenhor you interested?

Travis Allison

Let me sweeten the deal: The next 6 people that apply at <http://camphacker.tv/mastermind-groups-apply/> will get a free Camp Marketing Web App worth \$200. That price includes 4 seasonal revisions over the next 12 months.

To see what I mean open this link on your phone: <http://camphacker.tv/otc-app>

Only for the next 6 applicants. Apply now: <http://camphacker.tv/mastermind-groups-apply/>

Kristen Parkin

Have you added the 6 or is this offer still valid?

Kristen Parkin

If offer is still available I am interested

Kristen Parkin

Are you signing up for this Tink?

Travis Allison

Hi Kristen - can you fill this in, please? <http://camphacker.tv/mastermind-groups-apply/>

Travis Allison

Jessica Tenhor - what did you decide?

Travis Allison

I need 2 more people (they'll get the deal!) who are specifically involved in day camps who'd like to have their own group.

If you are interested: <http://camphacker.tv/mastermind-groups-apply/>

Joe Richards

Jessica Tenhor is in. Just not at computer.

Kristen Parkin

I completed it Travis. Sorry for delay I was in meetings all morning

Travis Allison

Good Morning! We've just had a cancellation in our group for YMCA Resident Camp Directors.

We're working for the next 8-10 weeks on getting more campers for this summer!

Please email me travis@camphacker.tv

Bill Joe Averitt

When is the next skype meeting? Is it still \$300?

Travis Allison

Hi Bill Joe - next meeting is 13:30 Tuesday the 28th. Price is still \$300. Can you join us?

Bill Joe Averitt

I'm researching your site, and if I feel is beneficial, I'll present it to executive director.

Free (to ACA members) Webinar - Mission: Planet Earth

Come learn how you can enable camp participants to go outside and explore their atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, and biosphere. In this webinar (free for members) on April 23, you will learn a little about Earth's interconnected spheres, and explore the ways that NASA is helping us better understand our planet.

Does anyone have a formula for staff/camper ratio? Not counselor/camper ratio, but rather your complete staff (counselors, administrative, maintenance, specialties, drivers etc.) If I have 130 campers, what is a reasonable ratio?
Currently I have 4 admin, 19 counselors, 16 specialty/lifeguards & other, 2 maintenance. Total 41. is this reasonable or too much?

Philip Coulling

We usually have 25 or so summer staff (plus full-time director and full-time caretaker). A full house is 88 campers.

Grego Dow

We have 2.3 campers to 1 staff. 35 staff with 82 campers. So you have about 3 to 1 ratio...seems good to me!

Kelly Rossebo

We have 90 campers with 25 staff

Mary LaVaque

We have around 200 campers with about 117 "staff" about 60 are junior staff that plan activities for the campers. But direct with campers about 5-7 adults with 15-20 campers

Chayale Shagalow Chazan

thanks so much for all your responses! I'd love to hear some more!

Sarah Anne Facey

The Ontario Camps Association Standards requires an overall camper-to-staff ratio of 8:1 or better. However this is applied only to staff who have direct responsibility for the supervision of campers. (Maintenance, office and support staff are not included)

Mary M Siniard

We have 175-225 campers per week - including church chaperones who stay in the cabins. We have about 25 summer staff to work in the kitchen, facilitate activities and spend time with the kids. We have 1 cook, 1 assistant cook, 1 maintenance, 1 director and 2 of us are administrative/guest service/everything else-ers.

Kevin O'Sullivan

We run a counselor ratio of 4 or 5:1. Most groups are between 8 & 10 with two counselors. Then we have about 30 - 50 non-counseling staff depending on camper registration. Overall we are at about 3:1.

David Walsh

I think this needs to be looked at as 2 separate issues. 1. The ratio of staff (with direct contact with campers) to campers. 2. All of the other positions that are needed for a successful summer. Do you have enough staff in those support roles? Are they the right person for that role?

Chayale Shagalow Chazan

Our counselor ratio is 1:5.
Im not asking about counselors, im asking camps what their complete camp staff/camper ratio structure is

Caterina Kolkman Maw

We have 120 kids & run 56-60 staff. We try to run 1:2 for full staff. Now sometimes we might have a couple staff with 1:3 but they are older staff kids. Who have been there & know what to do.

Hey #CampPros near the Chicago area, on May 1st The Midwest Association of Independent Camps is having an educational event that you won't want to miss. The event will be in Deerfield, IL from approximately 9am - 2:30pm and includes two main panels of speakers, one on health & wellness and the other on drug related issues.

The health panel will begin with a focus on immunizations/vaccine related issues. Panelists will include Bob Ditter, Paula Lauer of the Ass'n of Camp Nurses, Ian Garner of Markel Insurance, and Doctors Louis Hondros and Jennie Schott.

The drug awareness panel will focus on a variety of issues in an attempt to educate camps on current events related to both staff and camper populations. Panelists will include mental health experts Bob Ditter and Melanie Kallal, Lake County States Attorney Mike Nerheim, Deerfield PD Officer Anthony Kropp and parent Lee Mulert

Cost of the event is \$50 for non-MAIC members and includes lunch. Spaces are limited, so if you or others in your organization are interested in attending, email MAIC President Gabe Chernov at gabe@birchtrail.com

Heidi Mabie

Hey Dan Lichtenstein, I'd love to share this on the ACA-Wisconsin page. Can you make it Shareable?

Dan Lichtenstein

Heidi, I'm not seeing where I can change the settings on the post. Are you sure it can be shared from group to group? I can email you two documents that detail the event and can be posted.

Adam MrAdam Perez

If you right click on the photo, it gives you the option to share it.

YMCA Camp MacLean in Burlington, WI is looking for a Waterfront Director for this summer! We are looking for someone with camp experience, lifeguard experience and is 21 years of age. Lifeguard Certification required with WSI preferred. This is a great position for that staff member looking to take that next step into leadership. If you know of someone, please feel free to have them message me or e-mail me at jstachulak@ymcachicago.org

Jessica Stachulak

Bumping this up as we are still searching for qualified applicants. We also have a few counselor positions available.

A couple of weeks ago someone from PA contacted about and was offering contract EMT staff. Please contact me again as I need your contact information. Thanks,

Roger Barkman, 4-H Camp Owahta
(607) 753-5214

PLEASE SIGN-LIKE- AND SHARE- HELP SAVE A LIFE...

Anyone have experience in offering promotions to promote early camp enrollment or bringing a friend? I'd love to hear about your experiences.

Michael Landry

I got some great advise from Joanna Warren-Smith. You have to schedule your discount/promotions to go from most generous to least. If you run a promotion outside of that schedule you are telling your most loyal customers they are not valued and that they might get a better deal if they wait.

This might not help right now but is something to think about as you plan 2016.

Laura Fuese Hall

I agree with Micheal. We do not offer a lot of incentives but our most generous discount if for those who pay in full by January 31, those families save \$100 per registration. We offer smaller discounts for signing up at an open house event. Families can also earn unlimited referral credits when new families enroll and mention them as the source of the referral. I hope that helps.

Kelly Rossebo

We have "Very Early Registration" through September 30th (\$100 off per week), "Early Registration" through November 30th (\$50 off per week) and unlimited referral discounts of \$25 for each week of enrollment the family brings in.

Tink Rabey-Hall

We provide an "Early Bird" for registrations (doesn't need to be paid in full) by March 15 -- seems late to us as well :), but these folks were used to registering in June! This has worked wonders for us in getting lots of families registered earlier. We offer the previous year's rates until that date. After that date, the rate increases to whatever the new year will bring. I am thinking a "Very Early" option would be a great idea (like Kelly mentioned above). Our families have responded really well to our initial efforts and are beginning to get it -- that we need to know what we are looking at for enrollment in order to hire correctly, etc. -- we're not just trying to get their money earlier. We also provide an incentive for "bringing a friend" or recommending us to another family. Each camper (returner and new) gets a gift certificate/store account of \$15 and "thank you" from the camp director. They can get as many of those as they can recruit!

Jason Dananay

Thanks guys. For those who do referrals discounts and gifts, what are the stipulations? Does it have to be a new camper?

Michael Landry

We say they have to be a new camper who is not using financial assistance. For us new means they have not attended camp in the past 3 summers. New families can only list one person who referred them and that is who gets the discount. We double the amount if you host a home show. (Sorry to incur your wrath Gary Forster! :))

Tink Rabey-Hall

Our referral gifts are for new campers -- we do allow siblings to put forward a younger siblings name.

Jason Dananay

Michael Landry - what is a home show?

Michael Landry

We ask families to invite friends over who might be interested in camp. We go down and visit, show some pictures/videos from camp and answer questions. Some families have had

us over to a dinner party, and others squeeze it in after soccer practice.

Jason Dananay

Nice idea, Michael. How far from camp do you travel?

Michael Landry

We travel any where from 1 - 3 hours each way. This has been our first year doing it and we often will leave with 3 - 8 new campers so for us the trips have been worth it. To get an idea of how far you might have to go you can map out your campers on google and get a very good visual. Also helpful for marketing, just be sure to make it private.
<https://support.google.com/maps/answer/3045850?hl=en>

Mike Moose Greenfield

We offer an early bird for April 1st, saving 10%. It gets less traction every year. I also offer a \$50 bring a friend discount and if they bring 6 friends, they come for free. In 5 years of offering this discount only 1 camper has come for free. I also make the offer available to my staff as a finder's fee.

As we stand at the precipice of the Spring ODC Season here at YMCA Wanakita, I present to you: the YMCA Wanakita ODC Fall Instructor Posting! Please pass it on to anyone you think would be interested :)

<http://www.ontariocampsassociation.ca/job/fall-outdoor-centre-program-instructor-ymca-hamilton-burlington-brantford-wanakita/>

I figure a lot of you guys are like me and do a bunch of purchasing this time of year at S&S; Worldwide. So, I wrote a blog post with my opinion of the top ten items every camp should remember on their S&S; order! I'd love to hear if you guys have any additions. Feel free to comment here or on the blog. Also coming soon...the top ten items EVERY camp should omit.

<http://www.kurtzmckinnoncreative.com/blog>

Gareth Evans

Can any other camps from Canada (preferably Nova Scotia) let me know about their shipping/duty? Thanks

Ettie Cohen

Can anyone share the games they made using the large cards?

Jerrold Henoch

diito to Gareth. Emma Fischbein, Emily Wolff...check it out.

Victoria Hoppes

Yes! Chalk from S&S; is the best. We go through SO much of it each summer!

Parachutes are also a big item for us. The ones from S&S; are so sturdy and easy to use!

Carole Peguiron

Very useful thanks

Sarah Kurtz McKinnon

Ettie Cohen...giant cards were really cool during evening activities to make even typical card games or tricks accessible to large groups of people.

Evagoras Constantinides

Great post!

Shanna King Watson

Thanks for the post!

Tink Rabey-Hall

We are right down the road from S&S; (Colchester, CT) and if you are within driving distance (CT/MA/RI) they have a Community Foundation that gives away pallets of returned items. You have to show up with a truck of some sort when they call you and pay them \$50, but we have gotten \$1000s of equipment and supplies over the past few years (I have a ton of chalk we will never use, Victoria, if you want to pay shipping it can be your's). You never know what you are getting but there has been very little we have been unable to use. We have also been able to send things we could not use with our camper and staff families on mission trips for schools and churches in other countries! Let me know if you are nearby and want the contact info.

Sarah Kurtz McKinnon

Tink Rabey-Hall...that is so awesome!! Thanks for sharing!

Victoria Hoppes

Thanks for the chalk offer, Tink! I will have to look into it.

We need to order water bottles, back packs, head buffs and novelties for our gift shop. Are there any vendors that you would recommend? Thanks!

Victoria Hoppes

We use 4imprint for various things. They have quick turnaround and can put your logo on almost anything: www.4imprint.com

Christie Peterson

Ellen at Larry Fox is wonderful. Quick responses, reasonable costs, and good quality. We've worked with them for years.

Michael Garcia Ymca

hAMAZING!!!!<http://www.bolducs.com/>

Eric Hindmon

I have a vendor out of Vagas that is great for all those items!
His name is Jeff Johnson and he is with powerpromotionsllc.com he mostly deals with casinos but loves camp and will help as much as he can!

Jessica Meade

Do NOT use Discount Mugs!

Jeff Huggins

[http:// www.marcopromotionalproducts.com/](http://www.marcopromotionalproducts.com/) is a great company. Price match and offer first time buyer discounts and regular promotions

Kristi Fulford

We love outfit your logo
Great quality and Sarah is amazing

Amber Holleman Grundy

Second Outfit Your Logo - we've had great experiences with them!

Kelly Vidovich

Show your logo was best price I found for water bottles

Jenn Macios

I also recommend Outfit Your Logo!

Jennifer Coe

Another recommendation for Sarah and outfit your logo. ...AND her kids go to camp! !

Franky Wehakee

Sarah at Logo Outfitters/Outfit Your Logo is wonderful and very easy to work with... and she supports ACA at our conferences!

Aimee Berger

Marcie Jacobson

Bethany Ringdal

We love Logo Outfitters too!

Ryan Kelleher

CC Creations- we use them for all of our branded items. Really great to work with!

Jan Peneston

Outfit your logo !

Martine Brouillet

Is this in the USA?

Martine Brouillet

I have a great one in Toronto Canada

Michael Landry

Sorry to be a broken record but we use Outfit Your Logo as well!

Mark Carroll

Yes, the USA. Thank you everyone for your help.

Jim Hooper

We use Logo Outfitters (outfityourlogo.com) too, but we are interested in bringing in something new to supplement. Looking for a bit more variety.

Jacklyn Grad

Everything summer camp

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

How about me , great microfiber towels.

Come live, work, and play in the beautiful Rocky Mountains! Colorado Mountain Camp, a residential adventure camp located in Colorado, is currently seeking a fun and dynamic RN to join our family this summer.

8-10 week position includes all food, lodging and an opportunity for free wilderness certifications. Seasonal contract is \$7K. Interested candidates can find more information on the position on our website or by contacting that director at lan@avid4.com. The opportunity to change lives begins soon, contact us today!

When I was a camper, I remember the staff playing Counselor Consequences. How is it played?!?!?

BUNK BEDS: We are looking to purchase smaller bunk beds for our littlest girl campers. Has anyone shopped for this before and furnished their cabins with this option? Is the only option a toddler bed? Thanks in advance for your help!

Dan Lichtenstein

Not sure what you're talking about agewise, but I'd caution about having different size beds. We had cot sized beds in 2/3 of our cabins and twin sized beds in the other 1/3. It really became a nightmare and finally, after several years all of our beds are the same size.

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

Agreed! We start at age 5 and have all the same size so they can be interchangeable with mattresses and each other.

We have a couple new elements on our low ropes course. Looking for some "storylines" to help us to facilitate these activities with third through fifth graders: Kings finger, whale watch, porthole, swinging log. Does anybody have some that have been successful with that age group learning team work and cooperation?

Kelly Rossebo

Jason Alan Colvin?

Camp Timberlane is seeking a camp RN for this summer. This is a great opportunity to work in a fun environment while making a difference in the lives of children. For inquiries please contact us at mike@camptimberlane.com or check out our website www.camptimberlane.com

If you have amazing food service that campers and staff love, how much are you spending per meal. I want to upgrade our food but I don't know enough about food service to know how much to budget.

Mike Moose Greenfield

I spend on average \$2.75 per meal. Dinners are more expensive, breakfast is cheaper. You need to determine what your menu will be and work from there. Your foodservice supplier may be able to help you out with a template. There have been several discussion on food

costs and menus if you use the search function and check the file uploads.

Amber Holleman Grundy

We are a little over \$2 per meal on average

Chris Smith

I've seen averages of just under \$2/meal to just over \$4/meal....

Ben Smoky Radley

Our average is around \$3

Jerry Huncosky

Stacy, try to keep this to about \$3.25 per meal or look at as a percentage of your overall budget. We feel comfortable with all Food Service costs at 15% of the budget. There is often not a comparison between cost and quality. Quality comes with a caring staff who desire to produce a quality product. I'd rather spend more on a good staff who create fresh home made products than a group who just throws it in the oven and heats it up. Try to come to a good blend of home made and per prepared foods and compare those costs. Also look at your food waste and how leftovers get used. Pre- prepared meals are often less expensive, but they are of inferior quality and those cooks can't use leftovers. You might feel like you are saving a few dollars but it ends up getting thrown into the dumpster and the kids don't like it as much and it certainly not as healthy. Call me if you'd like. I'll have you connect with our Food Service Manager.

Jason Ostroski

What Jerry said! Perfect philosophy. A skilled, knowledgeable, caring Food Service staff is worth it. If you are lucky enough to be near a culinary school or a trade school with a culinary program, inquire about folks looking to do summer internships. You might just find some young energetic people who have lots to bring to the table. Literally. Match them with an experienced FSD who is willing to teach and nurture and you're bound to have a great program.

Colin Stewart

These numbers are per child per meal right? As is \$3/child/meal? Correct?

Jerry Huncosky

Correct, Colin.

FULL-TIME, LEADERSHIP POSITION WITH AVID4 ADVENTURE (www.avid4.com) available now.

Regional Manager - Washington DC Metro Area - Open and Manage new summer adventure day camps (climbing, padding, biking, and outdoor education).

Read full job description and apply online - www.avid4.com/jobs/positions/.
Let me know if you have any questions - paul@avid4.com.

This is a fantastic article to use not only as you develop camp program but also to use for a session during staff training...it really hits on a lot of what we aspire to accomplish for campers AND staff.

Is any resident camps in the North East one looking for a Golf Professional? Let me know, a friend is looking for a summer position.

Have anyone used companies that does Mass E-mail/Direct Mail to help expose your camp? If so, who is your agency and do you recommend?

Ryan Moore

I've just moved camps and in the past I've used ConstantContact, we tried the free version here called MailChimp, but we're going to Constant Contact once I get the money for it in my budget squared away.

Bill Joe Averitt

How many e-mails did you send vs responses received?

Amber Hicks Eck

Constant contact gives you all the feedback from the emails you send. It's great and recommend it.

Roger Barkman

Local Penny Saver as our campers are local

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

If you are looking at Direct Mail (i.e. mail to people who aren't already users/you don't have data for), there is typically a 1% return rate. I have had some success with communities unconnected to camp by using ValPak Coupons, Reach Magazine coupons, etc--those "junk mail" coupons that go to every house in a certain zip code. I just learned of EDDM (Every Door Direct Mail) -- you can create your own postcard and send it via EDDM to every house in a certain zip code without buying the list. Still likely to have a small return and works best with a coupon or call to action offer.

Adam Delezenne

If you did want to buy a list I've used Experian. You can choose psychographic groups and have them generate lists according to different criteria. Still looking at a 1%ish response rate.

Adam Delezenne

Direct mail is best used in conjunction with other channels: geographically targeted web ads, print ads, special promotions or unique programs. If this is a last minute push for more campers I wouldn't recommend it.

Bill Joe Averitt

Thank you everyone!

Does anyone do a scrapbooking / journaling program at camp? What is your favorite place to get supplies? Thanks!

Natasha Marie

What a cute idea for a program! Love it!

Alicia DeHart Theriault

We often buy scrap booking things from www.createforless.com

Victoria Hoppes

We made our own camp journals as a craft last year. One of our counselors created this really great guidebook for our staff that gave activities to do in the journals.

Brittany Verlenich

Michaels has reeeeeeeally big clearance sales 3-4 times a year. They just had one so I stocked up. PLUS! If you're a teacher (or maybe you have someone on your staff that is one), have them get it since they get an additional 15% off!

Amy Duchaine McKinney

^Not to mention their great coupons!

Mary Ann Stamey

Brittany Verlenich, are you willing to share your guidebook. I would love to do journals with our middle schoolers.

Chris Kaake

Jessie Kreider where do you guys get supplies?

Jessie Kreider

Most of our craft supplies we get through donation. Agree with Michaels 2x a year stock up sale (This week :)) For scrapbooking supplies I have tons from our scrapbook retreats where we have a table where people can swap supplies they no longer use. Paper for journaling we get through printing companies getting rid of paper.

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Ettie Cohen

Victoria Hoppes would you share the guidebook possibly?

Victoria Hoppes

Yes! Send me your email and I will get it to you.

We based it off of this book:
<http://www.amazon.com/How-Be-Explorer-World-Portable/dp/0399534601>. It's really great!

Ettie Cohen

Moonlightsummer15@gmail.com
Moonlightsummer15@gmail.com

Camp Encore/Coda, a co ed residential music and sports camp located in Southwestern Maine, seeks a Girls Head Counselor/Group Leader. The Girls Head Counselor/Group Leader works with the directors to oversee and provide leadership to the campers and staff across all age groups (3rd through 11th grade) and deals with all aspects of the non musical side of camp including staff training, camper adjustment, program planning and execution, staff supervision, and parent communication. Dates are June 18 to August 18 and the salary is based on experience.

Applicants should have experience in a child related profession or professional camp experience, strong leadership skills and a desire to work with college aged students. Please pass this along to any potential candidates. Thanks!

<https://www.facebook.com/campcorecoda/timeline>

Any Girl Scout directors out there? Have a specific question about ARC Small Craft Safety and how your council is handling canoe training.

Andrea Kelly

Waiting to hear more from the webinar this afternoon about our partnership but we are proceeding with plans to have me get certified through the American Canoe Association as of right now.

Linda Archer

What webinar? Missed that....:) I know ACA is a resource that's been tossed out there, but for our seasonal staff and our training schedule, it isn't the best suited for us.

Andrea Kelly

We have a clinic week before regular staff training begins for those who need certifications for their positions. I run lifeguarding and canoe.

The way we are trying to handle everything is doing it in-house. Having the instructors decreases overhead costs and helps us to offer more trainings for camp staff and volunteers.

Andrea Kelly

False alarm about the webinar today. That one is for 1st aid and safety courses. I thought I had heard about something but must have had a mix-up.

Linda Archer

No worries. I was furiously searching on Pearl and didn't see any. Thanks! I know something was mentioned at the ACA Kindered meeting, however, what I remember being mentioned was "Red Cross didn't do away with Small Craft"...and that was it...

Andrea Kelly

For those who are already Red Cross instructors, there's a "bridging course" and self study guide on their website (Instructors Corner) to become certified to teach, with no formal in-person course. I haven't looked further than that

Linda Archer

Thanks Andrea. I'll look into it and see what I can find. I would really love clarification from GSUSA on this matter, but I don't believe it will come in time for this summer.

Andrea Kelly

Anytime! I also want the outdoor badge requirements in time for summer program planning but I don't think we'll get that either. Happy camping!

Lori Rosene

Within the last two weeks there was an email from the American Camp Association regarding the Basic Water Safety Course. And I was on the Red Cross store site yesterday and all the materials are available for sale. I sent an email to the contact named but have not heard back because I had a couple questions....no response yet.

Linda Archer

Lori Rosene, do you still have the email? I don't remember it coming across my inbox. I'll search. Thanks!

Jenn Macios

We certify our staff through small craft safety. We have staff who are trainers in small craft and life guarding

Erin Johnson

I certify our waterfront staff onsite. It is such a specialized certification that it is hard to find.

Lori Rosene

Linda Archer the email came March 31 and May have been a Campline or something similar. Can't find it while on my phone. Red Cross contact email is Matthew.Haynes@redcross.org

Linda Archer

Ok, thanks! I'm not sure I get campline anymore but will search again. Thanks for the information!

Lori Rosene

Linda Archer it was an ACA Now with a header about Child Abuse Month.

Linda Archer

Thanks, I found the information on the website. I'm going to have to read, figure it out, and move forward. Thanks again! For anyone else searching:
<http://www.acacamps.org/partnerships/red-cross-small-water-craft-safety-course>

Linda Archer

Ok, so from what I'm reading, it seems that Red Cross has brought back Small Craft Safety? I'm so confused! We were told last year that ARC would no longer be supporting it, but then they went online, and now it looks like I can register a course and instructor. Does anyone follow my line of thought here? Did I imagine all of this? :)

Lori Rosene

That's why I sent an email asking basically your question. :)

Abbie Orozco

Our territory manager from the Red Cross, Cindy Dassow said she would be attending MidStates, she is a great resource! We certify canoe and are looking into kayak training through the classes provided by our state department of natural resources. I believe they are American Canoe Association instructors.

Jamie Alisa Hill

I spoke with my local ARC chapter reps yesterday about this. GS is pretty much the only organization that cares about this cert. but since many Small craft instructors have lapsed, ARC can not support the practical portion of the cert. there is an online portion with no official way to finish skills testing without instructors. My local chapter (Reno, NV area) asked me to submit my personal small craft skills and experiences and previous trainings so he can possibly get me approved as an instructor. This is all unofficial. He also suggested ACA trainings.

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Paisley Nash-Dooley

I'm a small craft instructor and it never went away, it's is sponsored by the St. Louis chapter and you can get all the materials from them. If your a lifeguard instructor, you just need to take the small craft course to become an instructor. But you have to find one, come on over to ohio in June and join my course.

Linda Archer

Paisley Nash-Dooley, it did go away. We received the information from the Red Cross. St Louis was where we were getting our materials but we were notified that on June 8th, 2014, the Red Cross was no longer supporting the certification.

Paisley Nash-Dooley

That's interesting, because I offered a class and got supplies last year. And never heard it was gone.

Earth Day Webinar on Wed. April 22 @ 2:00 pm EST

A.j. Richard

Thanks for posting!

Hey there Camp Pros! I'm in need of a Ropes Course Director and an Outdoor Camping and Living Skills Director for this summer at YMCA Camp Weona, outside of Buffalo, NY. We have really struggled to find viable candidates for these two positions and could really use your help. Resumes and/or inquiries can be sent to ghouck@ymcabn.org. Thanks in advance for your assistance!

I am seeking sleepaway camp nurses. If you have any extra resumes please send them to me at: ephram@campwekeela.com Thank you!!

Hello all,

I am looking for new dining hall tables. Our dining hall is also a program space so I would love ones that have a bench attached and fold up so they can be pushed to the side. Does anyone have any suggestions on sites or whether round, circle or square are beneficial? Thanks

Erin Aschenbrenner- Flores

Look into Mighty Lite...I just ordered \$11,000 worth of tables and chairs through them. They were awesome to work with...sent me free samples tables/chairs to try (and keep) and really helped us find the right product. Their prices are also very competitive. :-)

Dave Hennessey

Search this groups' posts as well, there is lots of conversation on this!

Linda Archer

Amanda Hall

Michael Ohl

Something I have found over the years, square tables are more functional (most dining halls are square so they fit better, allow more tables to be set up at one time, etc) than the

rounds, while the rounds allow for better connections during meal times between campers and staff. It really depends on your dining hall set up as to which would be best. If you can connect with an Interior Designer to do some donated work it may help your decision.

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

We are buying the elliptical ones this spring...hoping for best of both worlds. <http://www.todaysclassroom.com/midwest-nbup10p-mobile-elliptical-bench-cafeteria-table-with-powder-coat-legs/>

Looking to get in touch with Jewish day and overnight camps in Canada. Is there a website that someone can recommend? Tia!

Mike Moose Greenfield

Check with the OCA for camps n Ontario. info@ontariocamps.ca or (416) 485-0425

Reesa Rosen

Thanks Mike!

Our insurance rep told us that a major trend of injury they have recognized is staff getting over involved in athletic activities and hurting campers or themselves. Does anyone do a specific training geared toward teaching staff about the appropriate level of competition and involvement in camp games?

Ashley House

Our motto is be 'child-like' not 'childish'

Jack Schott

Lincoln Do you play most of your sporting activities by age? The older kids playing with older kids and younger kids with younger kids? We have found that when we play mixed age staff and older kids are better at controlling their competitiveness and are naturally more nurturing of the younger ones. It may be that staff playing with older campers play like they are playing with peers in a pick up game at school and play more competitively and this leads to more injuries. Not sure the root cause of this phenomena. Cool to have statistics across the industry from insurance folks.

Mike Moose Greenfield

We brief at the beginning of each week about playing to the level of the campers, based on their age and physical abilities. We adjust the level of play like flags vs 2 hand touch for younger age groups

Elizabeth Sreniawski

When I was younger and on staff we were taught to use "caring restraint." I like that term because it reminds you that you literally have to restrain yourself from playing/going as hard as you can so that you can provide the best care for the campers. It's easy to get caught up in capture the flag or some goofy competition, but staff can also remind each other if they see things becoming unsafe.

Mike Simmons

We teach counselors to be aware of factors such as age, heat issues, and promote non-competitive fun. Most importantly though is that camp is for the campers. Staff needs to facilitate a safe and enjoyable experience and not drive kids to the point of injury
I would be interested to see the types of camps your insurance agent referenced. My guess

is it would be sport specific camps .

Dane Nelson

The truth is that if you have staff members playing in games with kids, especially games which require running, kids are going to get bowled over and possibly injured. My suggestion is that it might be an excellent role play during training to hone in on that fine line between facilitating fun for campers by participating, and posing a danger to them because we're bigger, stronger, and get carried away just as easily as they do. That said, I don't ever remember this happening at CNP.

David Toth

No joke. We saw the same thing with male summer staff. There are some games they just don't partake in anymore, especially for Sr high camp. Too much intense competition.

Jerrold Henoch

Last Sumer we had one staff dislocate a knee is a staff floor hockey league and another staff dislocate a shoulder doing a simple obstacle. I think both were because of the intensity of the staff. Not sure what the answer is for staff vs staff or sr campers vs sr campers. Sometimes when people play hard they get hurt . tough to balance it all without watering down, padding up and insulating everything.

Brittany Verlenich

I agree with Dane Nelson! I do my best to mimmick what camp will actually be like during training, so they have an opportunity to build a tool kit of solutions for when those things actually happen (also, it's fun for the staff to play games :))

Kat Schwind

We "teach" a session during staff training called "How to Play" and we go over all this stuff. We point out when people get a little too intense and when things should be toned down for when campers are involved. Also it helps us identify who may have an issue with competitiveness that you wouldn't guess right off the bat.

Allison East

We had a great counselor our business manager asked us not to rehire because his camp injuries have cost us so much in insurance money

But other than that counselor, I think we've been pretty successful in instilling in our staff that we're "here for the camper," and that that translates into games. As soon as I see anything getting too intense with counselors I pull them to the side and remind them, "hey, we're here for the kids, remember? Try giving them a shot." That normally makes them refocus on helping the campers on their team do their best instead of using their own skills to win.

Lincoln McLain

Wow thanks guys. Great answers, I love the idea of having a simulated game during staff training. Maybe hype the staff up for the game and just as you're about to say go, stop and debrief. I think if we get a grip on this problem we could make camp way safer and more fun. I love the camper first view to combat staff competitiveness too. Jack Schott: we do split up our ages as much as we can, but admittedly we're a smaller camp so it requires us to have some age spread to run bigger games. Dane Nelson CNP for life. Great to see you here!

Amber Holleman Grundy

I'm not suggesting that this is a good answer - just joking. But when I was a counselor many years back, our director would gather the staff before competitive games and remind us that if a counselor was injured because they were being too competitive, don't bother to come to the nurse or anyone else for help. Just crawl into the woods and die. And if a camper was injured by a counselor, the counselor should get them help, and THEN crawl into the woods. Of course it was all in good fun - she intended it to remind us too not take the game too seriously and make it safe for the kids

Michael Garcia Ymca

We do a solution circle that I lead about this topic. We call it "If I see the bottom of your feet you are not working". Staff should be playful but not playing with the kids in our programs.

Stephanie Ruby Compton

I am a big fan of the 85% rule. I tell my staff "I know you can be a competitor and win and what good does it really do that you can dominate a competition of people who are at least 2-5 years younger than you are?" I had a director once who implemented the 85% rule --- if you feel yourself pushing and raging and going for it - you are at 100%. Now tone it back to 85% and compete at that level.

I have also used the analogy with campers when we let them play much beloved Capture the Flag on a very wet field (when it rained pretty much nonstop two summers ago and we barely managed to squeeze in the game one night) and explained that it will be a lot more fun if we all play at 85% and stay healthy rather than 100% and get hurt. What's nice is if you see a camper going all out on the field, it's really easy for a staff member to say "Hey - let's bring it down to 85%."

Tink Rabey-Hall

Kat Schwind do you happen to have a session outline or any resources for your How to Play session that you would be willing to post here for others to use?

Kat Schwind

Tink Rabey-Hall I don't have any sort of session outline. We typically play a variety of games (Bunko, Nuke 'em, Kub, Capture the Flag or Bonkers) and use moments from those games for teaching (either good or bad). For example, pointing out that Jenny walking off the field after her team lost and then screaming at Nicole isn't a positive way to deal with loss. On the flip side, letting Kyle know that cheering on John when he was the last one of the Nuke 'em court is great! We want to help them see that campers are always watching and it matters how they handle things. They can be bummed and upset over a loss but they need to know how to appropriately handle it. It is amazing how some of the people who "knock an interview out of the park" are the ones you wouldn't expect to have an issue with losing but it can really affect the whole cabin if they let it. We definitely do not try to embarrass the staff but sometimes their actions do that anyways if they are an extreme sore loser - we want to help them with that too so that way it is not a problem for campers and other staff but it is also just a good life skill too. Wow - that was a long answer. Sorry!

Jerrold Henoch

Emma, Emily - lets look at this for Staff Training

Lincoln McLain

Zach Klipsch had a great talking point on this a few days ago. We'll see if I don't butcher it. Zach said: Campers will rise to being half as goofy as counselors, and campers will rise to being twice as physical.

We ask our counselors to overcome their hesitancy to be goofy and put their energy into

being present with the kids. Then they take that same formula and apply it to the physical activities and we get upset with them for being too physical. It's almost hypocritical. ;) I'm definitely going to acknowledge this to staff. This is been a great thread. Very helpful.

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

We have a focus at our camp on it too- and redwoods has online training modules that address the issue too.

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Zack Bear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1nwVuhteMM>
we show this as part of the conversation about it

Has anyone come across any great activities or resources for virtual teambuilders? My staff is spread out around the world and I'd like to start teambuilding a bit before they arrive this summer beyond the basics of "answer these questions telling us about yourself". Thanks!

David Walsh

Try expert online training. Lots of video resources and quizzes. You can track who has viewed the videos and select what modules and videos you would like your staff to cover.

Erin Hollen

thanks...anything i won't have to pay a hefty fee for would be great. I'm looking for more fun teambuilding type of things rather than staff training. I'm not a subscriber to the school of making people who aren't on contract yet do work off the clock prior to camp.

Todd Churchill

Have each team member develop an on line profile about themselves and things They like to do this way every member can find out about each team member before they arrive at your camp

Bill Joe Averitt

Private facebook group

Lori Rosene

Neat idea...not sure how much time it would take....but how about setting up some kind of game. Like some kind of puzzle that they play. Evidence them into groups and give them a task they have to complete by SKYPE?

Lori Rosene

Evidence...suppose to be divide...gotta love auto insert ...NOT!!

Erin Hollen

Lori Rosene interesting concept. I'll have to figure out how to make it work. We have a staff facebook group we use for most of the group communication. With the time differences all over the world, I haven't been able to figure out a way to make anything through skype work. Skype interviews were a scheduling exercise in themselves :) I've been looking for activities we can do through our facebook group quickly and easily as that seems to be our best option as everyone is in school, has jobs, families, and other things going on.

Lori Rosene

Erin...Sometimes what we consider a real challenge in scheduling our staff do pretty easily. Actually they often have 24 hours in a day 7 days a week to work with. In addition ... Having to figure it out is part of the problem solving. The task may be secondary to the communication that needs to take place on the front end.

Victoria Hoppes

With Google hangouts you can have multiple people on a call at once!

Dianne Chamberlain

Nikki Bell, MB Sullivan--an online camp counselor profile page made by each staff member. Great idea pre-camp!!

James Davis

Have them work together to create a virtual version of your camp in Minecraft.

Linda Archer

I've found that the app Groupme has really worked with my staff this year. It wasn't intentional for them to use it the way they do but now all new and old staff are in it together and they chat often. I assume when we all arrive at camp, they will have more of a feeling of knowing each other than in past years. Groupme sends mass messages to everyone, regardless of type of phone or computer. But beware, If you don't download the app, the texts could be overwhelming.

Kristina Calvert

Every summer, we create a facebook group and encourage the group members to introduce themselves. Then, we get really creative with questions we want them to answer or impressions of celebrities or anything goofy. (Miley Cyrus impression, big spoon or little spoon, sing a line of your favorite song, etc.) I like to give them a lot of options and have them pick. However, a time limit is important. It makes them scramble and keeps the videos from being 20 min long. (Which still may happen.) The videos are fun to make and to watch. We still have conversations about videos from two or three years ago. It's free, easy, and fun.

Misty Dawn Shay-Rivera

What if you grouped them together (old staff with new staff) in smallish color groups (maybe 4) and had a virtual "color war" and you could post ranking online to maybe your Facebook page... You give everyone tasks to complete as a group and this continues all the way through staff training. You can have them complete tasks together... And rewarded points. Every group gets points for completing the task...but the first group gets 40 points, the second group gets 30, third gets 20 and the last group gets 10. Everyone gets some points to make it worth it. You can mix fun activities with online training...etc.

These are just ideas:

task one, come up with a name for your group that everyone agrees on... Then post it to the Facebook group.

2) everyone in your color group completes online training video #1....

3) come up with a List of 10 things EVERYONE in your color group has in common.

4) come up with a list that of camp resource sites where you can find games, songs,

activities, etc. everyone must contribute at least three links. As a group you must have 10 different ones! (This will give them resources as well as maybe links to ones you've never heard of)

5) as a group come up with at least 25 household items that could do double duty as a useful or fun item to also have at camp.

6) come up with 10 games that require less than 5 small props that can be played anywhere with campers. Find the rules or explain them in the body of your list. (This could help to put together a small camp resource book for your counsellors...and they have helped contribute.)

7) Bonus points for the first group who can get everyone in their group on one single Skype call! Take a screen shot of it and post it back to me. (This puts it on them to figure out the timing/scheduling and everyone has the opportunity to earn bonus points)

You can add the idea that someone had above about a virtual camp in minecraft... Or any other tasks you may think of or want your group to complete.

Herb Toplan

Ask your staff to come up with some ideas. If they generate it, more likely for greater participation. They also are using the technology to make it happen. A good challenge for your senior returning staff too.

Erin Hollen

Cassie Mckenzie great ideas for some of your internship working with the fb group :)

Robert Lawton

Photo album scavenger hunt. Each participant adds to a personal photo album to share with the group with one photo for each item on the scavenger hunt list. Ideas:

- personal hero
- best friend
- personal sport
- silly moment
- a family member
- favorite hangout
- favorite teacher

Robert Lawton

Of course, I like the Andrew Zimmern approach to the world. Maybe you could have each participant contribute a favorite recipe or two for a camp cook book. Participants might even try to cook each other's favorite dishes - or maybe the cooking staff could take on a few of them during the course of the summer.

Speaking of which, I'm making "cat head biscuits" for lunch right now... Curious?

Emily Wahlquist

Melissa Gail Banks I like the photo scavenger hunt. Anyone have anymore ideas on way to welcome new staff?

Hey everyone, I've already used the search bar but did not find what I'm looking for so thought I'd ask!

What are some things that you have put in welcome packages for your staff?

I am planning on including a copy of the staff manual and some tools for the summer to help with running programs. As this is my first year as a Director any resources/ tips on creating a solid staff community from the beginning to the end of the summer would be great!

Dusti Mahoney

One year we got m and ms, scissors, tape, a bandana with the camp map, safety pins, a pin, a highlighter, rubber bands and I think maybe crayons... super helpful little stuff like that.

Maddie Wilmes

Friendship bracelet string! I don't know how popular bracelets are at your camp, but everyone loves them at mine! String is cheap too, maybe 50 cents or cheaper at walmart, and counselors always forget to bring some to make bracelets

Cassie Bloy

Sharpie, Pen and Notebook

Janet Keilen

boy scout camp---chocolate buys you almost anything including loyalty.

Mike Moose Greenfield

Camp theme map for week 1
Schedule
Name tag
Candy, Chocolate, Snacks
Pen
Pad of paper or notebook
Staff manual
Bug spray & sun block
Games/cards
Play doh
Glow sticks
Sharpie, masking tape
Box of cereal & plastic spoon
Flashlights
Hand sanitizer
Cheap sneaker laces
Baby soother... just to keep them wondering

Ashley Sylvester

car on campus forms, ropes/picture waivers

Wade Nyhuis

Before they arrive I have them fill out a little questionnaire. I tell them that I will compile them all and send them a roster of the summer staff and their answers to the questionnaire so they can get to know each other. Some questions on there is asking for their favorite candy, beverage, and cereal. I put their favorites in their welcome baskets.

Jen Clinton-Shc

We include travel sized toiletries, with a note that says "sunscreen, bug spray, & deodorant are all key things to keep handy during the summer, we hope these will come in handy until you can to the nearest Walmart". We take them on Walmart runs as needed so they do indeed get set up with full sized versions. Especially helpful for staff who come in via plane

and don't pack full sized toiletries.

Jen Clinton-Shc

Feel free to message me for more info!

Victoria Hoppes

I got a window decal with our camp logo. It was a nice touch, and something I still enjoy. :)

Christie Peterson

Wade Nyhius how many staff do you have? I like this idea but not sure how feasible it will be for us.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

A little first aid kit (nitrile gloves, band aids, gauze, tape, antiseptic pads), emergency whistle, pencils/pencil sharpener/erasers, jolly ranchers.

Abbie Orozco

We send general information about the environment and towns around camp, frequently asked questions for staff, and a couple of the forms they have to fill out

Lee Carpenter

Bug spray is a necessity if you live in deer tick country - in our state Lyme Disease is a workers' comp claim - we cut way back on the claims by giving everybody a can.

Derek Bergman

Along with items already shared;
We give them a bunch items from our camp store.
Always fun to see them trade, especially when the guys want the pink water bottle.

Kim Steward Betts

Pen, map of camp, staff handbook, candy, laminated name tag on lanyard- all in a zipper document holder with our logo

Gareth Evans

Interesting stuff here Jen

Kim Steward Betts

We used to include an inexpensive watch so they would have no excuse for being late!

Wade Nyhuis

Christie Peterson, we only have 10 to 12 staff. Smaller staff allow you to accommodate to them more.

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

You should really think about ordering these really great super Absorbant ,compact , quick dry towels. And we can have your camps logo put on them. They come in 16 great colors.
www.taliitowels.com
The Ontario camp association made us a preferred vendor.
They're really a smart purchase.

Eric Shendelman

Yes the Taliitowels are an excellent choice. I now have them at my swim school and the clients are buying them up fast. Super compact, absorbant and the colours are awesome.

Elle Smiley

We include practical things, like water bottles, inexpensive dry bags for boating, caribeaners, or even flashlights. Usually, it will be one of those each year so returning and new staff won't get overloaded with the same stuff again and again.

Ruth Cassidy

I always include local places to grab food at. Helps them from wasting break time getting lost!

Travis Allison

We used to drive our 1st year staff into the town that everyone goes to on their day off, take them for ice cream and then tour them around to great places for a student budget. (also we told them to avoid that creepy guy at the one piercing place)

Amelie Nicole

notebook& pen, name tag, whistle, t-shirts

Summer Camp Staff always found me unapproachable, but the staff training activity I outline in this Go Camp Pro blog post made a HUGE difference in helping healthy confrontations to come about at camp:

<https://www.gocamp.pro/teaching-our-staff-to-approach-us/>

Jack Schott

Thanks James!

David Seddon

Thanks for this. I'm picturing high places to "jump" from this summer.

James Davis

Awesome, David Seddon! Make the most of it. You only get to "jump" once. Then you have to think of other dangerous things to propose in future years :) But jumping is still the best one.

David Seddon

They don't call me "Dangerous Dave" for nothing. ;)

Lori Rosene

Very nice!!!

Amanda Dotson

This is great! Love it!

Courtney Ormsby

This is awesome! I am also thinking...

Al Ferreira

I am torn about the potential deceptive nature of this - I like the overall concept and at the same time I would struggle if it brought my staff to a point where they would question what I was doing in the future? Did you have any issues that emerged or was that handled in the debrief?

Joel Whitehead

Lindsay Rule

Robert Lawton

Al Ferreira, I think the whole idea is to get staff to question what they see if they think they see a problem - even if it turns out not to be a problem.

Not a camp story, but it's related to what we want... We had a PVT shut down a tank gunnery range for half an hour once because he got confused and shouted "Cease Fire!" instead of "Correction!" When his crew got debriefed, the Old Man asked him what happened, and he let the kid explain. When the kid finished, the Old Man looked at him in the eyes and said, "Son, if you ever think you see something unsafe again, yelling 'Cease Fire!' at the top of your voice is exactly what I want you to do."

Leadership sets the tone: safety first, no repercussions for questioning a situation, keeping an eye out for unsafe situations, and training are where it's at.

Alexandra Denise

Nicolas P. Martinez

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

James, thanks for sharing this!

Elyse Adelberg-Miller

Thank you for sharing this!!

Stephanie Ruby Compton

James this is fantastic! Thanks for sharing. :)

James Davis

No problem all! Thanks for the kind words.

Al Ferreira - I do share your concerns. We actually have had times where staff assumed I was "messaging around" but I was actually serious. It shines a light on the fact that things like these need to be done with care.

But I DO appreciate that it catches staff off balance. Most of our "been there, done that" staff can figure out the trick to any sort of team building activity. They know the words you are supposed to say in debriefs. This presents a new and different challenge.

Also, we start the exercise in the context of team building - so staff are well aware that things are "not as they seem."

I appreciate your honest feedback!

Mark Gray

Matto Reichart Jim McCaslin Elle Molinari

Tom Lamborn

good article. thanks. worth the read.

Laura Twigs Johnson

great article, thank you!

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

For camps that use an ATV for maintenance. We're looking at replacing our old Polaris Ranger and have the option of getting another Ranger or a Yamaha Viking. Anyone have experience w/ the Yamaha Viking or a newer Ranger?

Alli Faricy

we got a new ranger in 2013. LOVE it! Have had no issues with it. the liftable back is super handy. a little wider than the old ones so depends on the trails and stuff you are driving on but overall i love it!

Mike Cohen

nothing runs like a Deere, Dan.

Gabe Chernov

I agree with Mike Cohen. Gator all the way.

Drew Siegersma

What year ranger did you have? I've also used a Kawasaki Mule, which was diesel. It worked well, except when cold starting on a cold winter day.

Matthew Clay Janeway

What are you gonna do with your old ranger ;)

Dan Lichtenstein

Drew, the ranger is at least 10 years old...not 100% sure. Matthew, we'll see what it will take to keep the Ranger running. There are certain staff who are well intentioned but tend to run these items into the ground. They can use the old Ranger

Matthew Clay Janeway

If you decide to part with it let me know!

Katherine Parnell

Following

Mandy Kuchenbecker

My campground says Ranger

David Toth

My son is a dealership Sr mechanic and works on both brands. would opt for the Yamaha. Quality, superior engineering.

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

I need a SOCIAL MEDIA SAVE:

We're updating our employee handbook and we're looking for good, well-thought-out social media policies and language. Do you have a policy that outlines a seasonal staff person's ability to post photos of themselves with campers on the social media of choice?

In the old days when I was a camp counselor (pre-digital, back in the 90s), we all took photos of our cabin groups in the Dining Hall or out on trips. After the summer, we had the pictures "developed" and - if we were organized enough - put these photos in albums (actual book-like devices - analog, not digital), which we may have shared with select friends and family.

What do you allow staff to do today? We're re-tooling our staff handbook and I would like to get this right. Please help. If you've got a policy, email it to me at ceo@smymca.org or post your ideas here. Gracias!

Mike O'Brien

We have a specific social media opt in/out clause on our applications. If parents opt in, then our counselors are free to post those campers' pictures. If parents opt out, we hand out a sheet of head shots of those campers and tell them in no uncertain terms NOT to post pictures of those children.

Counselors also sign an agreement stating that they will abide by those rules, and if they choose to ignore them and post pictures of campers who have asked not to be photographed then they forfeit the right to serve at our camp in the future. Also included in that agreement is a statement that if a parent complains about pictures of their child, the counselor understands that we will side with the parents in pursuing legal recourse to have them removed if necessary. It's strong language, but it scares them into not posting those kids and in three years we've had no issues.

Elaine D'Erasmus Burnett

We run a camp for children with disabilities and our rule is very simple...No posting of campers on any social media outlets. Staff and staff fun is allowed to be posted anywhere but NO kids. We also provide our families with a scrapbook of sorts for their camper at the end of each session.

Nathan Scott Brant

Thanks Elaine. That has been our policy, as well. What I noticed this winter, in reaching out to past staff, was that several people had a picture of themselves with their cabin group posted as a profile or cover shot. I love their passion for the children they serve - and I hesitate to crush it - so I was looking to see if anything else is out there. Many thanks! :-)

Holly Scott

Greg Shaffer

Nathan Scott Brant

Mike O'Brien: How many kids and staff do you have? I am trying to gauge the feasibility for your system in our programs.

Mike O'Brien

We serve around 500 kids per summer. Our staff is all volunteer, and over the course of the summer we may have between 45-65 counselors, some staying all summer, some just for a

week or two.

Charles Giegerich

Nathan, I can email you the agreement I use, and if you like it adopt it

Nathan Scott Brant

Many thanks Charles!

Charles Giegerich

Just pm you

Mike O'Brien

I can also send ours tomorrow

Nathan Scott Brant

email me at ceo@smymca.org

Nathan Scott Brant

Gracias!

Charles Giegerich

Sent.

Greg Shaffer

Charles could you email it to me? greg@blacklakebiblecamp.org thanks

Victoria Hoppes

Charles: I just PM'd you.

Charles Giegerich

Sent Greg Shaffer

Dan Reynolds

I encourage staff to share photos on our private staff site. I discourage sharing on their personal pages. I think our policy needs updated as well.

Martine Brouillet

I would love to receive the policies discussed here as well at martine@campt.ca. I am looking into more than just the posting of pictures. What about the "friending" of campers? What about talking or mentioning the camp in social media. That worked well for us in terms of recruiting but do you regulate WHAT they can talk about on their social media? We post heavily pictures of campers on facebook and we designate one person at each of our campus allowed to do that. Parents LOVE that. The ones who don't can opt out at registration and we make it very clear that we will do that we our picture. It is a GREAT way to reach out to new parents. I don't have a policy per se in place though for campers and am looking for something to have them sign. Thanks for your help! (New to it an I love this group :)

Robert Lawton

Photo sharing by staffers and campers is awesome free marketing so I wouldn't recommend asking people not to share via Facebook or email where the audience is much

more limited. A "policy" along the lines of "please share responsibly" is about as much as I could hope for.

What I'm seeing from our own campers and leaders is one or two profile or cover photos on Facebook of a moment that holds significant meaning. A very few will post small, private (friends only) albums of their adventures. Some do end up in public space, but it seems to be a very small number, and all of it is great marketing.

Charles Giegerich

You can create a private group on Facebook and name it as you wish. For an example camp nowhere summer 2015 and you can have your staff and parents join the group. Then you can upload pictures and it's very private and only accessible to its members. I do this for the camp I run, but only use it for sending messages to my staff during the preseason and season of upcoming events and news. This has worked well for me.

Shelly Craig

I would love to have a copy of that as well. Zoe7sc@aol.com

Charles Giegerich

You want a copy of my social media policy Shelly?

Shelly Craig

Yes please!! Thx

Charles Giegerich

Will send now

Shelly Craig

Thank you so much!

Here's the NBC piece on camp that aired nationwide on Monday. Most excited that a couple of CampEasy's Featured camps got some awesome attention!

Here's the piece as it aired in one market -- we're still collecting links from WNBC to KNBC and everywhere in between: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N97emVSgt64>

Fun fact: can you tell that I was interviewed by a bowl of wax fruit while the reporter was on speakerphone?

Karen McCann

Great piece Brooke! Congrats!

Brooke Salkoff

Thank you Karen !

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

In case you haven't seen already, there is a post tonight on Humans of New York that features a lovely lady who talks about her experiences at summer camp in the 1930's. She explains the impact the experience had on her, as well as some of her memories. I thought you might all like to see. It makes

me very proud to be part of something so special.

Erin Stevenson

Mel <3

Dick Thomas

So simple, yet so profound.

Owen Langbart

Awesome. I was visiting my mom in Florida a couple of years ago, and we had lunch with her octogenarian friend. She sang me, in full, the song they used to sing at her camp on the last night's candle ceremony 70+ years earlier. Camp makes an impact!

David Seddon

Thanks for sharing Mel!

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

So, my job through the school year has me bouncing around anywhere from 3-6 or so sites a day. There are several times in my day that I only have 20-30 minutes at my desk, and it just isn't enough time to start anything. So in addition to checking voice mail/email etc., checking the posts in this group has become my new favorite way to kill a few minutes, and take away some cool ideas. I'm so thankful to Travis for giving us a place to network!

Bill Joe Averitt

Thank you Travis!

Jessica Banguis

Looking for summer party flyer or summer camp? Its really here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

I am looking to start up a skate park activity sort of deal and I'm looking at constructing some ramps. What are the best ramps to have if I can only have a few this year?

Andrew Lalley

It depends on how big of a space you are using. I would go with at least one 6 foot quarter pipe along with several 2-3 foot ramps (both curved and straight) which should be a pretty good basic set up. A fun box (<http://www.benito.com/prod/1026-K.jpg>) would also be an easy way to give your campers a lot of options with one build. If you locate it centrally and line it up with your other 2-4 ramps you can have a pretty complex area without too many builds

Tim Wolff

Thanks Andrew Lalley

Katie Adrian

I have no useful information to share except that I am trying to get rid of the skate ramps that we have been storing in our warehouse. There has not been a skate camp in my time! Anyone close to Alaska want to buy them?!??

Grego Dow

Katie Adrian sounds like it's a great time to pull out those ramps and start a skate program!
:)

Mark Young

take a look at Woodward camps. They are the gold standard

Shawn Moriarty

You could also contact Y Skate Camp in California. They are partnered with Element.
<http://elementymcacamp.com/>

Tyler Pagel

KimberlyJosh Mallory

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Hi all,

I am a graduate student studying Recreation Administration at Indiana University. I am giving a presentation focusing on required training and supervision training for summer camp staff at traditional residential camps and day camps. I had a few questions that I would love your camp professional input.

I was wondering:

- What type of training you require for your staff (First Aid, CPR, Child Neglect, etc.)?
- Why do you require this training? (is it state mandated, ACA required, etc)

Other questions I would like your profession input on:

- How do you train your staff in regards to supervision?
- What do you teach your staff about supervision once the campers arrive?
- Why do you use this method?

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you so much!!

If it is okay with those who respond, I would love to mention your name and camp in my presentation!

Joel Van Egbert

Hi Paige, Good luck! 1. 1st Aid/CPR/AED, child abuse., EPI-Pen Admin 2. Best practice 3. We talk about ratios a lot, do scenarios, have a parent panel speak about hopes/fears 4. We remind them about training, constantly check-in and do drills like missing camper and evacuation. 5. Nothing at camp is textbook, kids are excellent at providing unplanned scenarios. I do not expect perfection from staff, but I do expect them to change their practices and behavior to best suit the kiddos. I've found through positive reenforcement, critical feedback and assuming good will counselors will have their supervision technique down within the first week. Joel Van Egbert, Camp Quest

Ashley House

Great Questions: I run a traditional Outdoor camp in Southern Indiana and I am actually an IU Alumni! :) Go Hoosiers!
We require CPR, First Aid, and Emergency O2. CPR is required every year. First Aid and CPR are required every 2. We also require 11 other courses through the Redwoods Institute to be completed before working camp. These are Appropriate Touch, Day Camp

Supervision, Aquatics Safety for Camp Staff, Bullying Prevention at Camp, Child Sexual Abuse Prevention at Camp, Playground Safety, Risk Management, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Social Media and Digital Communications, Shallow Water Blackout, and Transportation Safety. There is an online and an in class portion to each of these. These are required for us to be covered by our insurance consultants, Redwoods Institute, and each staff member completes these on an annual basis.

We cover a lot of the other questions in these required trainings - but addition to these we have an 'all staff' meeting where we discuss specific considerations for the site staff will be serving on. We lead games and songs and get a feel for the personality of our staff. During this time, we can also plan real 'camper' moments and show what can happen when activities break down.

Something we have done in the past that I would love to bring back is a parent advisory board, where we bring back parents and let our staff ask them specific questions. Those perspectives are invaluable.

I do not mind at all if you use my name should you use any of the information I shared. Its easy, Ashley House, and I work for the YMCA of Southern Indiana. The outdoor camp I run is called Camp Honor Bright. If you have any follow-up questions or if something doesn't make sense feel free to email me at ahouse@ymcasi.org

John J J Hickey

I work at Camp Scatico, an ACA certified sleepaway camp in Upstate NY. I organize the staff training pre-camp in accordance with Camp Policy and in accordance with the Board of Health and the ACA.

During pre-camp Orientation (and depending on job description) our counselors can receive safety training in First Aid, CPR, Epi-Pen, AED, RTE (Responding to Emergency), Lifeguard, as well as certifications in Climbing and Archery.

Our insurance company also comes in to talk about child abuse and appropriate behavior around children. Someone from the Board of Health informs us on local hazards and health and safety. He is also present when the Head of Waterfront outlines Water Safety & Supervision, Rules, and Procedures.

We make a Hazard Tour video every other year which we show. When everyone is at camp we stage a fire drill within the first 48 hours.

Our Maintenance staff demonstrate how to use a fire extinguisher, and inform us on day to day and emergency procedures (water leaks etc.) Our Medical Staff (we have a doctor and several nurses) explain state law about meds. They also outline daily Health Center procedures.

We cover In and Out of Camp supervision in Health and Safety session. We also role play a situation. Demonstrating the procedure and having them go through the motions helps them to remember what to do when required.

One day of Orientation is done by a respected camp professional like Dr. Chris Thurber or Scott Arizala. They do a combination of leadership sessions as well as role play sessions.

We have a very powerful role play session later on in training where a volunteer (counselor) is told only half the information going into the role play. He has to decipher the rest on his own. That is a popular session. We do age-specific sessions in smaller break-away workshops.

We bring in a panel of 4 parents to talk to counselors about their hopes and fears about sending their kids to camp. They do a Q&A; at the end where counselors can ask them

questions, and that is very helpful.

We do a similar Q&A; panel with returning counselors. New counselors can ask them questions on any topic (procedures, traditions, songs, games, what if... etc.)

The Red Cross training and certs happen with specialty counselors and group leaders over the course of a week. The next 5 days is with the entire staff.

Then during the Summer on Monday Nights (which are a required night in for all staff) we have additional training and meetings.

I hope that was helpful.

Camp Gallahue

Hi Paige,
I am looking for camp staff and posted at IU, my camp is 1/2 hour from Bloomington. Do you know anyone looking for summer camp job?

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Hey everyone,

We're looking to purchase some new aluminum canoes this summer. Where do you all get your canoes from? We're looking to get quality aluminum canoes at a good price. Any suggestions?

Thanks

Laura Fuese Hall

Is there a reason that you need aluminum canoes? We switched to a newer material and they are lighter, less hot and quieter.

Jen Burch

Aluminum is pretty indestructible, which makes them good for camp. Repairable, too. Fiberglass is a decent middle ground. I'd still rather portage Kevlar, though...

Carrie Kishline Lawson

Laura, what type did you buy and how much did they cost?

Christopher Colahan

Following

Rosemary Pezzuto

Where are you

J.D. Detsch

Akron, oh

Laura Fuese Hall

We shopped around for old town canoes. We opted for longer canoes, 15 feet? I believe that we paid about \$4500 for 8 with shipping. Since it was a few years ago, I am not 100% confident in the cost. We had always had aluminum before. I should note that we use

canoes for flat water river paddling with campers who are 8-15 years old for 1-2 hour lessons. Hope it helps.

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

"Addicted to Camp" - kindle version - is free tmrw for download over the next 3 days. Share this link with your staff for download & set them up with some pre-camp reading to be more prepared for this summer.

April Keighan

Not available for Canadians :(guess I'll just have to buy it!

Kristen Parkin

Bought a copy for my kindle couple months ago part way through book my kindle broke. Will try again when I get another

Nadia Khokhhar

Kaiti Kelley

Matthew Smith

Thank you!

Chicka Elloy

Ps You pushed it to the #1 kindle EDU Leadership book on Amazon

Chris McNeely

Fantastic read, Chicka. Big fan of the camp circle of life!

Dave Hennessey

Training using "Addicted..." today with leadership staff! Am leading an all-ymca-day-camp-staff keynote on Saturday using "Addicted..." as the theme! Front-line staff training next week using "Addicted..." as the theme! Can't use it enough! Jessica Hillary

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

Chicka Elloy I am interested in the idea of using your book for a staff gift--can you please email me details? ecochran@myy.org Thanks!

Chicka Elloy

Thank you Elizabeth and to all the camps that gifted this book to their staff this summer. All profits from books gifted in April 2015 will go to the ACA
<http://www.acacamps.org/support/change-a-life>. Pls contact me for group/staff discounts.

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Thoughts? (please watch the abc interview video)

Kara Lynn

Putting seatbelts on a school bus will slow down the process of children escaping in the chance of a fire. The seats are made tall to help lessen the danger without restraint. Trying to get several 5 year olds out of a burning bus who have seatbelts on would be extremely difficult.

Mary Sullivan Camuso

In NJ our buses have seat belts & my counselors make sure the kids are wearing them. However in an emergency situation trying to get 50 hysterical kids out of seat belts could potentially be a whole different nightmare which is why we practice evacuations. My understanding is school buses are designed in a way that allows for the exemption for wearing seat belts (higher back seats, raised passenger compartment, reinforced shell)

Kara Lynn

I have watched it, I have seen this several times. Children in a panic can sometimes forget what to do. In my opinion I still believe it would extend the evacuation process, which could be fatal.

David Allen-Hughes

NHTSA director said "unquestionably, seatbelts save lives" in his interview in the video...

Mary Sullivan Camuso

Numerous federal and academic studies have concluded that school buses are the safest form of ground transportation of all, in fact. The National Safety Council says they're about 40 times safer than the family car.

About 440,000 public school buses carry 24 million children more than 4.3 billion miles a year, but only about six children die each year in bus accidents, according to annual statistics compiled the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. About 800 children, by contrast, die every year walking, biking or being driven to school in cars or other passenger vehicles, said Ron Medford, the agency's deputy director.
(USA Today 2010 news article)

Herb Toplan

(from article) California is one of six states to require buses to have passenger belts, and the only one that requires shoulder-to-lap belts. But the law applies only to buses built after July 1, 2005; dozens of buses used by some of the countys 27 school districts are older than that.

Still, safety experts and educators say thats not a cause for alarm: Buses, even those without belts, rank as one of the safest ways to transport children.

School buses are built to keep children safe, said Ray Payton, a spokesman with the California Highway Patrol, the agency that inspects all school buses. Even those without seat belts are designed like a carton of eggs. In collisions, they absorb so much of the impact. <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/buses-641374-belts-school.html>

Morgan Tebeau

I drive a school bus WITH seat belts and even when I tell the kids they need to wear them their response is, "We're on a school bus. We don't have to wear seat belts." For some reason they think that because they're on a school bus, seat belts aren't necessary.

Robert Lawton

These photos are "safe" for work. They do not feature injured children. However, they might help get the message across.

<http://www.ajc.com/gallery/news/national/photos-deadly-school-bus-crash-tenn/gCPqT/#6485471>

Hi everyone! I'm looking for some fresh new ideas as in themed meals like PJ breakfast or Sports lunch and twilight activities to add to our camp weeks in July, can anyone help by commenting what you implement in your programs? Thanks in advance!!

Grego Dow

How about strange utensil meal...like giving everyone a spatula, whisk, slotted spoon etc. when they come in for a meal...and that's all they can use for the evening. Works great with spaghetti and soups etc. Make sure it's something messy that you can't just go at with your hands.

Carrie Morrison

Kids love strange utensil meals!

Carrie Morrison

Backwards meal...wear you wear your clothes backwards and start with dessert

Caterina Kolkman Maw

Barbara Johnson this is a cool idea.

Rosemary Pezzuto

Brown bag dinner. Everyone gets a brown bag and gets to bag their dinner. Then they eat outside. Twins dinner. Dress like someone from another unit. Dinner and a movie.

Cheryl Suydam-Taylor

Crayon dinner: dress head to toe in one color, put paper on tables to create masterpieces. You can create all sorts of contests with this one! Great for photo op too. Take a cardboard box, decorate it as a crayons box and have each cabin stand inside.

Robert Lawton

Our cooking staff employs a lot of exchange students. At one meal, they put their heads together and came up with dishes that represented comfort food from their home countries. Best meal all summer!

Cortney Tyger

Chardae Domonkos check these ideas out!

Jess Musoke

Athletes or Mathletes, Rock on or Neon, Pirates v.s Ninjas, Letter Lunch -- just pick a letter from the alphabet and they can be anything that starts with that letter, Twinner (twin-dinner) oh goodness I could go on!

Kristine Balles

Night at the opera. ...everyone has to sing at during the meal, they can't talk..maybe a good way to end camp day!

Kristine Balles

I really gonna miss being at camp this year :(

Ashley Sylvester

backwards dinner. clothes, chairs, meal order are all backward.

Robert Lawton

Oh, a Hogwarts-style banquet with the tables aligned into houses and the head table up front facing everyone.

Marcie Glad

Eat spaghetti with your hands, bed in breakfast (last morning, box of bagels and stuff for easy clean up), cookout breakfast. We have a surprise backwards day at our camp once a summer. The counselors don't even know it. They wake up to all of their shoes being flipped from how they had it. We have flag lowering in the morning. And then we have dinner for breakfast. Most of them have caught on by then. That's when we announce that activity 1 is activity 5, and so on and so forth until the whole day is backwards, right up until the end of dinner.

Marcie Glad

I've heard of a silent monk meal. Where counselors have their hoods up and when someone speaks, the counselor silently places a rock in front of them.

Marcie Glad

We do a walking-taco meal. = Taco salad in a Doritos bag.

Christine Harper Brown

Monks breakfast or lunch. It begins after grace. If you speak one of your table mates takes away your fork, then knife, then spoon... It is a lovely quiet meal for the most part. Aside from the giggling.

Christine Harper Brown

Pick a holiday! Theme the food, the table numbers, the dress to the meal - have fun.

Paul Bryant

Diner Dinner - if you are from Chicago, think Ed Debevecs. If you saw Pulp Fiction then think Jack Rabbit Slim's. T-shirted, jeans wearing greasers and pig tailed poodle skirt adorned staff as the wait staff take orders from the "customers" (campers). They should have snippy attitudes like at Ed Debevecs. "What'll ya have hun?" Serve hot dogs, hamburgers, fries and if you are lucky and have a great food service staff...milkshakes. Have the staff break into song - something camp appropriate from "Grease" or of the 50's Genre. Twist dance contests. You name it. Boom. Drop the mike. You just got served the Diner Dinner. (singing in my best "Wild at Heart" Nick Cage voice or Elvis) Treat me like fool. Treat me mean and cruel but love me...

Curt Jackson

<http://summercampprogramdirector.com/50-summer-camp-theme-meals/>

Mc Loud

We do a Birthday Party dinner! And celebrate all the weeks birthdays at once. Complete with hats, noisemakers, banners, etc.

Nathan Payne

Stephen Summers

Heather Stephens Edgar

These are great ideas

Jessica Banguis

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

Find out summer camp or summer party flyer here <http://goo.gl/nLhpS7>

We are a non-profit, inner-city/at-risk youth camp. We give a cross necklaces to each participant at the end of our traditional sessions. After the original price went up were are looking for a different cross. We have found 1 that we have been using but still not fully happy with it. Do you all order any crosses from any where or know of a good company? We need about 700-800 for the summer.

Kat Schwind

We had a member of one of our churches who is retired and makes cross necklace for fun. I know it can be difficult buy maybe find someone local to support who can then in turn support your ministry?

Rosemary Pezzuto

What an out having kids make their crosses

Mary M Siniard

Fun express, CTA Inc, Ironfish

Day Camp leaders! What do your weekly (or daily) schedules look like for staff? We'll be staggering staff since our Day Camp runs from 7am-6pm daily, and I'd love to make my schedules more counselor-friendly. Thanks!

Kelly Vidovich

following!

Dawn Marie

We have a rolling check in... and staff have a rolling schedule. We do 745am-3pm and then after camp care til 630pm... so staff arrive at 745, 830, 9am and then 230pm. On Mondays we do more staff earlier to help with the new campers!

Kelly Vidovich

We do something of that sort, but it is hard to determine how many children are coming early or staying late each day. We include before and after care in our program, so parents can just decide that day if they are coming early or late. How do you keep your ratios?

Dawn Marie

We generally have lots of kids early their early on in the week, and like clock work, they get later and later! We are unique too, as we have an indoor play structure that the kids play in during check in to keep them busy!

Andrea J Steffens

I went to this format 2 summers ago and found out quickly it works well for our camp (consistency with kids) and staff!
I hire 20 counsellors for 88 kids each week and their schedule rotates. Staff like this schedule bc it provides them a "day off" to still enjoy summer, relax and destress.
I have 2 shifts during the day one is 7am-4:30pm (3 breaks am 15, 30 lunch and pm 15) next shift is 8am-5:30pm (with same breaks)
My staff rotate every other day. So if they work M, W, F as a counselor one week the next week they work T, TH as a counselor.....
BUT on off days they will get scheduled as a floater to cover for the required breaks so we can keep our required ratios. This way it gives them more hours, usually 32-35 a week! (We are not allowed to work them more than 40 in a week.
If it's confusing I would b more than willing to send a sample schedule to anyone.
I also started requiring EVERYONE be available from 7-5:30 each day so I am not working around anything else, as well as 10 out of the 12 weeks of summer camp!

Elisa Hennies

I have a seperate staff for before and after care so my counselors work an average day of 830-430. They overlap morning and evening care for the busiest times

Alicia Bentley

I'm looking into this too! I am looking into doing scattered 4 hour shifts from 6:00AM-6:00PM, but I also want enough staff to alternate days. I want to be able to offer plenty of hours and have plenty of staff on duty, but I'm limited with my budget.

Chelsey Land

Our day camp runs 7:30a-5:30p, but the program is 9a-4p when a majority of our campers are present. I schedule staff in these time frames:
7:15a-10:30a (2 staff, my lead staff start at 845a so I have 4 by 845a)
9a-1p (4 more staff come in so now I have 8 staff until 10:30a)
12p-530p (2 more come in so I still have 8 staff until 1, my lead staff leave at 4p)
I try to keep 8 staff on at all times except for during the extended hours when 2 staff are more than enough to handle the 20 campers (give or take)

Kathy Kisa Lyons-Frumoff

We run 7:30 to 5:30 I am there at 7 am to open up, turn a/c on and answer phone messages, emails.... two staff come in and work 7:30 to 12:30 . The doors open at 8. my lead comes in at 8 stays until 5:30. Then I have another come in at 8:30 and work til 5:30. At 12:30 we have another part time person who comes in at 12:30 and stays til close at 5:30. Staggering staff works well for us. We limit our camp enrollment to 35. The majority arrive between 8 and 9 am, and most are picked up by 5. I leave at 4 pm and my lead closes up. We give them an hour paid lunch when they work an 8 hour shift, and a 20 minute break when they work 5 hours.

Stefanie Lawhorn

Our camp runs 7:30-5:30pm with scheduled programming from 9-4pm
I do two counselor shifts. 1st shift 7:15-3:15pm and second shift 9:30-5:30pm.
We do flag and an all camp game til 9:30am (when second shift starts) Then in afternoon at 3pm (first shift ends at 3:15pm) we lower flag and offer snack until 4pm. Hope this makes sense!? I schedule 2 plus staff with each group for scheduled programming 9-4pm and all can comes together for more coverage for before and after care..

Abby Wessel Messner

We run 630a to 630p with a 9-4 camp and then before and after camp care. We have lots of kids and lots of staff so we staff in pods to allow the counselors to have one day off per week. PM me if you'd like to see the schedule from last year. It's a little crazy but the staff seem to like it.

Melissa Dawn

I have morning care (7-9am) our normal camp day (9-4pm) and aftercare (4-6pm). For morning care parents can drop off anytime between 7am and 9am. Our regular drop off is 9-9:15am. Everyone has to be available from 645-615pm but I rotate out their shifts. I run weekly sessions so schedules are the same mon-Friday and then change up the next week. shift 1 is 6:45-4:15pm to cover morning care and the regular camp day. shift 2 is 8:45-4:15 to just cover our regular camp day. shift 3 is 8:45-6:15pm. with shift 3 we cut counselors as kids get picked up but I always keep a ratio of 10:1. I hope this makes sense :) if not feel free to message me or email me at mmusgrove@ballwin.mo.us and I can explain better or show you an example of my master schedule

Brittany Verlenich

Thank you for all of the responses! We don't have before or after-care, so that eliminates part of the challenge, but our camp runs for so long each day that we need to make sure we're giving breaks and lunches, scheduling for no more than 8 hours per day, etc. etc. you all get it. :)

Stephanie Smith Westmoreland

We have what we call "floaters". They are scheduled to give breaks to the counselors throughout the day since we want to maintain consistency with who the kids are assigned to and parents know who is in charge. It works well.

Anyone have camp nurse leads?

Jen Deasy

search in your parent community - works for us - if not them, they have good word of mouth!

David Walsh

Try WhizResources. We just hired a nurse through them.

Kathryn Kelly Luera

I heard a great idea recently of approaching colleges in the area that have a nursing program and trying to get up an internship program. Apparently sometimes programs will even provide one of their instructors to come and supervise the interns. Just a thought.. :)

James Davis's recent post about this topic had caused a lot of conversation in our office.

Having a work environment that so many grow up in, it can be a real shock to when you are in a new role and people don't see you the way they did the years prior.

Some great tips in this article to educate leadership staff with.

Fred Wasiak

Leadership is a journey!

Jerry Huncosky

This was interesting, thanks for posting it.

Erin Stevenson

Thanks for posting

One-week camps...do any of you have bedbug prevention strategies? We're considering purchasing Activeguard mattress covers, but at \$60ish per cover, we're looking at \$14K. Additionally, they're not supposed to be washed (ick!) and last 2 years (\$14K every 2 years). We're told the sniffing beagles won't work because they'll be too stressed out with the volume, plus the cost would also be around \$14K per summer for 3 dogs per Sunday for 8 Sundays.

Hollie Penuel

We bought a heat treatment system, and treat cabins quarterly (even with no signs of bugs). As others have mentioned on other posts, inspect cabins weekly so that you can catch them quickly.

Christopher Colahan

Thanks, Hollie Penuel. We put our traps as well, but those seem to work best when the cabins are empty. Once camp starts, the people are just as attractive to the bedbugs as the CO2 and pheromone traps. How does the heat work? Are your cabins insulated? How do you heat them up in the winter, assuming they're not insulated? Do you use something like this: <http://www.greentechheat.com/summer-camp-heat-treatment.html>

Skt Looney

Bedbugs die at 120 degrees. In a lot of camp cabins, this temperature would be fairly easy to reach in the summertime by simply killing the AC/fans. A portable steam cleaner would also work on the mattresses, but would be time consuming (but probably cheaper than a \$14,000 solution)

Hollie Penuel

We have the traps too, but the bedbugs don't seem to care about them. When we inspect, we look in the spaces between boards and bunks. You won't always find live bugs, just signs of them (fecal stains... Gross).

As for the heat treatment, we bought a propane powered system. And did spend a lot of money. But it was a lot cheaper than paying someone else to do it. Our thought is that bedbugs are now a reality in our industry, and we need to be able to take care of it on our time. Also, we have treated our cabins in the winter. They are all heated and insulated, so we just crank the heat up the night before preventative treatments.

Adam Bell

Buy the heat treatment system. Get trained well on it. Everything else is like putting a bandaid on a severed leg. Diatematic earth and heat are the best combo. You have to heat it correctly though or you'll only Kill some of the bugs so get a good training

Adam Bell

To your originally question, the only way to truly "prevent" would be to heat treat everyone's stuff while they come into camp. That's very impractical so you should have a frequent inspection plan and a fast response plan instead. Bedbug proof mattress covers won't do anything for you if the bugs can hide in the beds themselves (headboards, joints, etc). We bought cheap white mattress covers just to help identify fecal stains - easier to see vs dark mattress covers.

Christopher Colahan

I agree Hollie Penuel about bedbugs being part of the industry. I'm trying to be proactive. Any suggestions on how to heat cabins that have no insulation? Any guesses if a tarp would retain the heat created by a propane tank? Adam Bell, what do you do with the Diatemacious earth?

Adam Bell

We use moving blankets over the windows and doors. They are easy to store and easy to hand with a staple gun. You can "open" and "close" them to help get the thermodynamics of the room correct.

Adam Bell

The diatemacious earth ee puff into crevices and put a boundary around the room. It's non toxic and will dry out bedbugs if they crawl over it. The heat gets them seeking a new place to hide and they hopeully crawl over the earth on their way and for

Adam Bell

And die

Adam Bell

Christopher where are you located? I can try and put you in touch with someone close who has experience with doing it this way

Courtney Jewell Abernathy

Deb Krueger

Christopher Colahan

Thanks Adam Bell! I'm on Long Island, the North Fork

Joe Hines

I agree with Adam Bell. Inspection, DE and Heat will keep you on top. We have plastic covered mattress. We have a protocol in place on if bugs are found. We do heat all buildings 4 times a year because we are a year around camp.

Joe Hines

Also most of our kids come from area that's is #7 in the country for bed bugs.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

We did one of our lodges with the new mattress covers and I don't like them at all. They really don't deter much and I don't like that we can't sanitize them between uses. Seems ickier than the bedbugs themselves! Heat treats and our dog inspections work really well for us. Way to go on putting together a proactive plan. Not only is prevention the best policy, but when bedbugs do arrive, as we all know they do, explaining proactive measures goes a LONG way with parents and clients.

Emma Gifford

Jessica Ruch

Mc Loud

We heat treat every bag coming in. Has worked so far.

Christopher Colahan

@Mc Loud...are you a 1-week camp? How many campers per week? How do you heat treat the bags?

Marilyne Jones

Yes how do you heat treat the bags?

Pete Fasano

We heat every bag too. Campers arrive and put luggage on carts. Carts are pulled into a converted shipping container that we heat. Carts are then delivered to cabins. Success has been significant. We have averaged just one minor bedbug incident a year for the last four years. Tons of finer points with this system. This was just the brief summary. Happy to go into further detail, share pictures, etc.

Christopher Colahan

Pete Fasano, I'd be grateful to learn more. Can I call or email you? My email is cpc49@cornell.edu

Mc Loud

We have a 'Heat Room' full of shelves with industrial propane heater. We heat bags for 130 people each Mon, Wed, Fri in Spring/Fall. Once a week in Summer. 2 hours.

Pete Fasano

Absolutely. My email is pfasano@gmvymca.org and my office number is 513-867-0600 ext. 12. Happy to help anyone who is interested.

Katherine Parnell

Christopher, I just sent you a message over Facebook that might go to your other inbox. I had a question for you!

Anyone have any secret sauce for keeping summer camp counselors engaged and focused on kids throughout the summer? I'm looking to put together a check-list/quick info graphic on it for folks to put in their staff manuals. Cheers!

Dan Weir

Sharing parent feedback with counselors about the impact they had on campers earlier in the summer

Ha Rothenberg

Staff events for just staff away from the kids all summer long!

Rosemary Pezzuto

Special recognition on the first day of each session

Grego Dow

We do a sharing time at Sunday staff meetings of the special things that happened the previous week. Letting staff share their impact on our campers with the rest of the team is a good segway to talking about the great opportunities we have ahead of us the coming week.

Mike Moose Greenfield

Staff parties (BBQ, pool, campfire, movie) at my house with non-camp food and lots of peanut butter (1-2 per summer), bus trips off camp property, sharing encouraging parent letters/emails, guys/girls nights, special food like onion rings for a staff meal on the weekend, sleep in day when possible, leadership staff take over the dish-pit or clean the big bathrooms

Sara Denise Reed

Christmas in July is fun. Have staff hand in a CLEAN sock. Return socks filled.

Todd Churchill

Theme weeks

Luke Bouma

The best thing I found to keep them engaged is to give them a decent amount of time down time. As camps get stressed many of have cut back on staff and time off for staff.

On top of giving them a fair amount of time off do fun things for them. Randomly drive around with some gatorade etc once or twice a week. It doesn't cost that much but did wonders for the moral and the work of my staff.

Treat them well and they will treat the kids well has always been my rule.

James Davis

Great suggestions, all!

Courtney Ormsby

This might have been an idea from this group....last summer we did a staff secret Santa in the middle of the summer. We picked names on Sunday, and throughout the week everyone had to do 3 kind things for the person whose name they chose. These included small homemade gifts, help in the kitchen, original songs, etc. It was fabulous for morale at a time in the summer when people are starting to wear out.

What kind of training do you give your counselors in dealing with Home Sickness? What are some of your methods of dealing with home sickness?

Rosa Saba

having kids keep a journal of the things they did each day that's addressed to mom&dad; ... so instead of just missing them, they get to look forward to showing them what camp was like :)

Heather Nicole

Drawing a picture of themselves with their family and talking about them help. Then you slightly switch the conversation to what they enjoyed about that day at camp and what they are looking forward to doing tomorrow. Often times they need a minuet to miss their family, but then need a distraction and something to redirect their thinking. Giving them something to look forward to is very helpful!

For a few of my harder homesick kids you can do a sticky note countdown of when they finally get to go back home. But on each day have them write something they are looking forward to doing that day with their cabin like Wed (Rockwall), Thursday (Capture the Counselor), etc. It really helps them realize they want to do the activities each day and

home isn't as many days away as they may feel. Hope this helps!

Rich Rinaldi

I do whatever Chris Thurber says :)

Erin Aschenbrenner- Flores

Pairing new campers with a returning camper in a buddy system, setting up a consistent time to call home and check in with family, plugging them in with a counselor that makes them feel special and important and ensuring they know what activities are coming up that they can look forward to.

Mike Moose Greenfield

Two cabin leaders per cabin helps as they have an extra person to bond to, staff getting to know their campers the first night, keep them involved with cabin or group activities, distract from their missing home with camp activities/people, reading a story, doing a camp activity they really like hang out with a staff doing a "special" assignment (like helping in the Tuck Shop), hang out with the staff they think is the coolest. Every once in a while they want to hang out with me. Great time away from the office!

Looking for some thoughts on photo policies for your camp. How do you manage devices such as tablets and ipods that have photo capability even with no internet access?

Joe Fortin

For staff/counsellors? One second... let me see what I've got...

Joe Fortin

6.4.2. Posting Pictures and Video Guidelines

Please Note: The following guidelines for posting pictures and video on the internet should not and is not intended to be interpreted as policy, but rather to provide some guidance to staff. For the purpose of ease of reading, image is used to describe both picture and video (and any sort of media).

You are strongly encouraged to keep the following in mind:

Some of our clients have declined to have their image taken. Please respect their privacy; do not post images of clients without specific consent. If the client is under 18 years of age, you must obtain parental consent.

Images on the internet tell only part of the story. What would a parent think if they saw it?

Pearse Hutson

As a BSA summer camp, we require every scout, leader, and staff to fill out an annual Health Form (A, B, and C). On part A, there is a Talent Release section that gives us permission to take and publicize photos and videos of our campers, unless specifically asked not to on that form (which has never happened in my 8 years of working there).

Here is the text quoted from that form:

"I also hereby assign and grant to the local council and the Boy Scouts of America, as well as their authorized representatives, the right and permission to use and publish the photographs/film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings made of me or my child at all Scouting activities, and I hereby release the Boy Scouts of America, the local council, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or

other organizations associated with the activity from any and all liability from such use and publication. I further authorize the reproduction, sale, copyright, exhibit, broadcast, electronic storage, and/or distribution of said photographs/film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings without limitation at the discretion of the BSA, and I specifically waive any right to any compensation I may have for any of the foregoing"

In preparing for staff training, we would like to do a session called "Big Deal or Little Deal. We would present scenerios that would have the staff discussing if the situation is a "big deal" and needs upper management input or a little deal that could be handled by the staff.

In the past we have done "agree or disagree" and it has worked well but need a change and thought this would demonstrate when to work as a team to handle situations and when to look for further input. Please send me scenerios that you think would work well. Thank you.

Erin Stevenson

we do that, but they have to move around the room, so if they think the individual would keep the job after said incident they go to hired at one end of they should be fired the other and if they dont know the middle and the middle gets to ask a question before choosing a side. then we tell them the outcome

Daniel Chapman

This sounds like a great session. Would either of you (or anyone else be willing to share the scenarios/incidents that you use?

Angela E. Arneal

Someone keeps eating people's food from the fridge.

Tara Bartlett Barker

Following

Angela E. Arneal

Pool watcher isn't being tentative at pool.

Angela E. Arneal

Person X likes person y, who likes person z

Anita Derstine Livezey

I would be interested in additional scenarios as well, this sounds like a good idea!

Erin Stevenson

We use things that have actually happened at camp so returners can help answer the question

Dawn Marie

Wrong language used at camp, camper tells a questionable story to counselor, aggression of campers

Greg Cochran

Scott Camp Tippecanoe this could help out along with the chain of command idea we did last summer.

Angela E. Arneal

Use of drugs and or alcohol on camp

Angela E. Arneal

Phone usage while on duty

Kathy Kisa Lyons-Frumoff

Following

Katherine Parnell

Following

Kate Tucci

A penis was just discovered drawn on a wall of a cabin. It is 10pm. This happened.

Angela E. Arneal

There's poop on the back of the toilet (happened). Heck, there's a tampon (and/or poop) floating in the pool.

Angela E. Arneal

Can't find a campers inhaler or epipen.

Scottie Roach

Ok people - most of these scenarios are quite obvious - let's have some grey area scenarios that are tougher to determine

Kate Tucci

I argue that mine isn't obvious, as my counselor called over the radio to ask for advice!

Angela E. Arneal

Right. These are not all obvious. If they were, I wouldn't be posting them. Just because professionals in the camp world feel they're obvious don't mean 18 year olds think they are.

Jerrold Henoach

Emma Fischbein, Emily Wolff

Janet Keilen

Human feces in the shower house. (SOOOOO much fun)

Janet Keilen

MMM.. could we turn it into museum and show everyone, or we could clean it up or find someone who will clean it up. tough one.

Joe Murphy

Camper A is has been bullying camper B. Camper A also has special needs. (This happens more than one thinks and staff never know how to approach it or whether to seek assistance!)

Dusti Mahoney

Homesick camper that just won't stop crying
Kid hasn't pooped in 4 days.

11 pm and a mouse just had babies under a girl's pillow (happened)
Someone constantly misgendering a trans camper
3 older campers in a triad relationship (happened)
A camper has told you they managed to flush an entire apple down the toilet (happened)
8 year old gets her period
A staff member is always bad mouthing the director
A staff member's grandmother is very sick and may die soon

Anyone have a simple point of sale program that they use for their camp store? We use a laptop for now, with hopes of purchasing a tablet in the future. We need to be able to set up debit accounts for campers. Thank you!

Jeremiah Mutty

TapShop running on an Android tablet.

Stephanie Huber Williams

The square on iPad/iPhone

Dan Baer

CampMinder has one built in

Rosanna Bylsma

following

Beth Kuehn Ehlers

You can set one up in Campwise, too.

What have you always wanted to do at camp but never been able to quite make happen?

Seth Houser

start a thriving alumni program

Debbie Wade Nickerson

Have a hot air balloon take off or land from our site

Bonner A Davis

Get paid for a full-time position.

Jerry Huncosky

Start a program for amputee children. Next year!!

Jennie Quinn

Hire my full staff before May 15th, and therefore preserve my sanity!

Joel Van Egbert

All of these are possible! I want to have kiddos see bigfoot while on a hike...

Chris Kaake

We have a downhill hike to get to the lake (and it really is a hike), and I've always wanted to construct a giant waterslide for everyone to ride down to the lake instead! And then a ski lift to get them back up. :D

Tim Wolff

I've always wanted to build a lake on our property and by a wibit set to put on it. If you don't know what wibit is, google it. Its the coolest thing ever!

Maria Paterson

Also wanted to fix up our A frame building from the 80's and have an outpost camp.

Ephraim Shapiro

Snow ball fight in July

Dan Lichtenstein

In seriousness, I think a big struggle for us is getting campers and staff to care for camp equipment. From putting balls away to damage to expensive equipment, this is something we're trying to focus attention on, but is a really tough nut to crack.

Patti Sampson

Jerry Huncosky, you should chat with the folks at Camp No Limits, they rent camps throughout the US to run their program for children, youth, and adults with limb loss & limb differences. Melanie Dash would be a great contact for you.

Patti Sampson

Dan Lichtenstein, my ACD came up with a great training module to address that issue with staff. It's essentially a game of "the price is right" but staff have to guess the cost of equipment/ supplies - and we tie it in to a brief budget conversation - without getting into a lot of detail, we explain that certain expenses are fixed, we can't have camp without power/ heat/ water/ food/ staff/ etc. so if we're always replacing/ repairing item A then we can't buy item B and "this many basketballs = 1 new (something really cool that they'd be excited about)"
I've found it's made a huge difference in how staff treat our equipment and supplies - because they have a better understanding that if they want to have/ use nice things, they need to take care of the things we already have.

Ange Atkinson

Giant food fight, have a cool speaker that is fairly well known, leadership camp out (happening this year), outdoor education during the school year, lantern festival (think tangled), college readiness activities for our leadership campers, build an outdoor classroom space

Robert Lawton

Well, when I was a camper I wanted the boys camp to head over to the girls camp for a big dance with music and food and games.

Now, not so much.

Katie Adrian

I want 12 shelters! Complete with cubbies for the campers' things and a fire place in each one!

Ashley House

Gaga! I think we are the only camp that still doesn't have a pit.
We have used mats a time or two. Not as fun.

Ryan Daniel

Patti Sampson that has to be one of the best ideas I have ever heard!

Patti Sampson

I agree Ryan Daniel!!! :) Donna MacPherson my camps ACD is behind the brilliant workshop.

Natalie Kemp

Joel Van Egbert I've actually made that happen!

Joel Van Egbert

Well I have the suit, but you know - for realz

Joe Richards

I have always wanted to have full time camp counselors who are paid to be at camp year round. Hire the most amazing people and offer the most cool programs because all of our staff would have all year to work on it.

Krishna Ganim

start a program for gender nonbinary or trans campers!

Elizabeth Libby Young

I want to play real world angry birds

Robert Lawton

I've seen real world angry birds done. The kids love it.
- giant sling shot (surgical tubing)
- stuffed angry birds
- targets made of cardboard boxes and paper towel tubes

Dress codes and body shaming...thoughts? Yesterday I met with a group of incoming CITs and a 16 year old female asked me if she could wear a bikini at our beach. I explained to her that we have a dress code and females are required to wear one piece suits or a rash guard. I don't remember exactly what she said, but she insinuated it was hypocritical that males are allowed to be topless while females are required to wear what amounts to a shirt. I couldn't fault her logic. Then I saw this article today, and while the clothes are completely different, the argument sounded eerily similar:
<http://www.today.com/parents/sister-slams-high-school-viral-post-after-girl-sent-home-t13721>

Drew FlynnDavis

Although I see her point, many parents could argue against her reasons as it may be considered provocative I guess we'd need to be careful on which 2 piece they would want to wear

Kelly Rossebo

The simple solution may be to have all campers wear rash guards...just a thought.

Brittany Verlenich

Require both young men and young women to wear rash guard shirts.

Benjamin Esposito

Christopher, while I don't have a fully formed thought here, the reason for the so-called double standard is cultural. Swim trunks for a man are considered normal bathing gear. Male staff wearing a tiny speedo would probably be frowned upon. As for the article, the girl is obviously not trying to dress provocatively at all.

Ashley Laree

Two piece swimsuits are considered normal bathing attire for women, so saying "well men don't have to wear rash guards or shirts because it's a cultural standard that the don't" doesn't work when also trying to ask the girls to cover up. I'm not pro-two pieces for campers, for the record.

Jaclyn Burton

In my camp experience the one-piece vs. two-piece dilemma often had more to do with functionality in a camp environment than modesty. Even so it's always a slippery slope with dress codes because they tend to focus more heavily on girls and emphasize the idea of their bodies being "distracting" or inherently provocative which is a harmful message to both genders and often overshadows the education or experience at hand (as in the article, where her dress was prioritized over her education when they didn't allow her to go to class).

Allison East

We're probably behind a lot of other camps when it comes to things like this, but we still allow staff and campers to wear two pieces. We serve campers 6-16, and in the 16 years I've been at camp (camper, counselor, director), we haven't had any issues with it. We have around 120 campers per week, and we swim twice a day. I definitely see both sides of this, but somehow for us two pieces work. I'd say 99 percent of the swimsuits I've seen have been perfectly modest enough to not cause any problems, and when we have had issues they've been with older girls we've been able to have one on one talks with and suggest they wear something else. We've pulled guys aside for shorts showing too much or wearing inappropriate shirts, so it's not limited to just girls. Two pieces are working for us!

Allison East

We did try requiring one pieces for girl staff one year. We provided them because we knew most of our staff wouldn't have one on hand and we didn't want to add expenses, but that failed miserably. Suits just don't fit everyone the same, so some of our counselors looked far less modest in those than their normal two pieces.

Gabrielle Coburn

A policy that girls can't wear two-pieces, but nothing about the male camper's swim attire is absolutely a double standard. Too often schools, parents, and even camps end up policing women's bodies in order to control male behavior. We have good intentions by wanting to "cover up" our female campers and staff, but it's an outdated way of looking at it. We should be teaching our young men to be respectful, and our girls to wear functional clothes for the activities they are engaging in. Granted I'm a all-girl camp, but our staff and camper bathing suit policy is "A swimsuit suitable for active involvement in swimming, boating, etc."

Melk Kowalkowski

I have worked at camps where 2 pieces are allowed and also at many where you have to wear a one piece. As a lifeguard, I would think to wear a one piece because of what the job requires. However, not all one pieces are created equal. I have seen more "slips" at the camp that required one pieces then I have at the other.

Lauren Michelle

My guy CITs and Counselors must wear shirts or rash guards. Problem solved.

Gabrielle Coburn

Also, Christopher Colahan... That girl is RAD for speaking up like that. Respectfully challenging a problematic system or policy is leadership, and that would be exactly who I want in my CIT program.

Lauren Michelle

And we don't require a one piece from girls, just a shirt or rash guard on top, regardless of bikini or one piece, same as guys.

Jamie Alisa Hill

At camp kids are active and as a CIT should be fully participating. We have the same rule (all girls camp) but our stance is "we want you to wear a bathingsuit / clothing you are comfortable being active in"

Dave Thoensen

This doesn't need to be an argument about fairness. It should be a discussion about what is appropriate for camp. Men should wear trunks, no speedos. Women may wear 2 piece athletic suits without anything that ties. Modesty is key. If it is something you are uncomfortable wearing in front of your grandparents it is not appropriate at camp.

Brittany Verlenich

Dave Thoensen I totally get what you mean, but you will run into problems with that last line, though. What is considered 'modest' can vary greatly between individuals.

Gabrielle Coburn

Dave Thoensen I would argue that functionality is key, not modesty. (Depending on the background/values of your camp of course)

Melissa Berger

If you're sexualizing an underage girl for her clothing choice, especially for something as reasonable as a bikini at some sort of body of water, you're at fault, not her.

Gabrielle Coburn

Also.... It's soooooo much easier to say to a kid/staff "That suit doesn't work for this activity because it could come untied or the strings could get caught on something" than trying to somehow communicate that their clothing is too sexy without sounding like a creep.

Christopher Colahan

I love this discussion and appreciate everyone's perspective! Cultural norms are a real thing...but I think I'm becoming more and more aware that norms reinforce a particular point of view that might not necessarily be right or fair. While we need to operate in society as it exists today, I think many of us got involved in youth development in hopes of creating better people, better citizens, and a better society. Dress codes used to seem so obvious to me, but now I'm becoming more aware of my "lens and bias." Based on your suggestions, I'm going to propose the "dress should fit the activity" approach to my staff to get their reactions. Thank you, Summer Camp Pros!

Benjamin Esposito

I think it's important to go by common sense and not by getting all riled up in one direction or the other. Inappropriate clothing is not easy to define, and will vary from camp to camp. Some camps are highly religious in nature and their standards are higher. I don't think it's advisable to slam them for following their beliefs. People love to get excited on social media and rant and rave like they're society's great savior, safe behind their screens, but we are not those people. We actually work with children and young adults. We have relationships with them, and we build trust. We know them face to face. We know when a teen girl is trying to get attention by dressing inappropriately, and we know that what she needs is not just a reprimand but a role model. Sometimes policies can get in the way, and believe me I love me some good policies.

Alexane Desbiens

I work at an all girls camp and we have the same rule. One of the reasons is that if a camper needs assistance, the staff member needs to be able to help without worrying about a piece of bathing suit untying or falling off. As CITs are counsellors in training it seems to make sense that they follow the same rule. It isn't a question of cultural standards or anything
It's more practical.

Scottie Roach

We require a one piece for our female staff and no speedos for our male staff. Primarily we are on public land and want them to be professional looking, plus functional. We recommend that they get a sport suit to insure there are no wardrobe malfunctions in the water.

Robert Lawton

Different people, different standards, I don't think we can make everyone happy all the time. The first step, at least, is to listen and empathize. I'm a camp photographer, so modesty is a very significant issue with everything I do, and I take it very seriously.

For example, I had one young fellow last summer tell me that he didn't think it was appropriate for me to photograph the boys swimming because they weren't wearing shirts (he always wore a rash guard). That concern had never come up before.

I gave it some thought, and I told him that if he or anyone didn't like a picture I took of them that I would delete it. I want the kids to like their pictures. That was the best I could think of at the time. I also let the camp director know about his concerns.

The feedback I got from the parents was that they loved the action shots of the boys jumping into the lake and swimming across each morning.

We also have a couple of people review all photos before posting them to our secure website so that no one would find themselves embarrassed. This system has worked well for us, and like I noted above, the parents really like it. We also screen for kids who should not be photographed at all. A bit of a tangent I guess, but related.

Emily Galbraith

My biggest concern is wardrobe malfunction - for both campers and staff, boys and girls. I want suits to stay on. I often see girls who have purchased a bikini top, but have matured at some point in the summer and are falling out of it. Also parents of girls seem to always send them in bathing suits with complicated straps that require help from an adult - interactions we try to avoid. Boys tend to have either giant shorts that fall down or are much too tight. We also recommend rash guards for everyone - sun protection made easy! Once we start talking about being active in the water, everyone get the idea behind our dress code and why we are pretty strict when it comes to bathing suits

I'd love to hear about any camps who bring campers into the kitchen as part of their program... how, when and how many? Last year we had groups of 10 prepare snacks each day for the whole camp, but we may want to involve them in meals...

Heidi Mabie

Kelly Rossebo

Kara Noble

Following

Vanessa Grose

We have a number of programs centered around cooking. We work with our kitchen staff and they work with the kids mostly. We have one program where they are making pasta, cupcake wars. We then have a challenge where they are able to cook and then have the camp or guest judges pick a winner. No more than 16 and we split them in groups so they are not all in the kitchen at the same time.

Shana Gordner Henry

I saw a great presentation on this last year at Mid States, made me realize it was more possible than I had believed. Still a hard sell to cooks.

Shana Gordner Henry

Thanks Vanessa Grose, good to hear. Hands on cooking takes a lot of time and "hands." So they make the pasta, how cool. How do you deal with all the sanitation issues? Lots of hand washing?

Vanessa Grose

Our cooks actually really like it. It's a way for them to feel a part of the camp community and the kids get to know them. It's usually with the older kids. 4th grade and up. The cooks go over safety and sanitation as their first visit. The counselors are there to help as well. That's why they are in small groups.

Kara Noble

Are there any regulations from ACA or Health Department on this type of program with campers in the kitchen? Campers have only ever been allowed at the front counter to serve at any camps I've ever worked.

Kimberley Fair

We had it in our kitchen for 3 summers and last year made the decision to move it to another building that has its own kitchen. The campers generally made something for an afternoon snack. Its worked WAY better it being separate. In the past we had lots of issues with the cooks buying into it and there not being the right feel for it. Now they can invite the cooks over to try what they've made and its really sweet to see them "giving back" to the cooks. Its a great way to teach hygiene as well. We go through a lot of gloves!

Mary LaVaque

Adding a kitchen program is huge considering this day in age most families don't even use the custom kitchen they built. We cook over fires so all of our food is prepped out based on unit numbers but the campers come in and help out with portioning based on serving sizes. One unit of about 15 campers comes in to do snacks and another will prep for the dinner menu. Great way for the campers to learn the actual size of a portion as well as use their

math skills to figure out how much of each item should be divided out to each unit based on number of campers and adults in the unit.

Shana Gordner Henry

We have had whole cooking camps that harvest food from local farms and cook amazing meals for themselves, in a separate building though, and invite the cooks. This works for a small group, and is great fun. But we are contemplating bringing in 2 or 3 campers in before lunch and dinner to help with things like potato washing, carrot peeling and hummus making to allow cooks the opportunity to do more scratch cooking.

Kevin O'Sullivan

Following

Kimberley Fair

That was what we had planned originally when it was in our larger kitchen, however we found it hard as our cook couldn't get that much done as he was spending his time supervising and making sure that they didn't get injured. We limited it to 4 campers at a time. We had them do pasta, sauces, generally helping to prepare the whole meal. If you have kitchen staff that are on board, I think that is great!

Kelly Rossebo

Hi Shana - we've been doing this for six years now. Our campers can choose cooking as an activity and prepare lunch and dinner side by side with our staff. Tons of upsides, no down. If you'd like, message me and I'll email our kitchen handbook outlining how we do it.

Kelly Rossebo

Btw...our health inspector is well aware of our program and supports it. Also, six years into this, all of my current kitchen staff have developed from our campers and program staff.

Rachel Silverberg Chadwin

following

Shawna Rau

One of the chores we had was veggie duty. All vegetables were peeled for the days meals. It was a good bonding time especially on turkey dinner night seemed like a zillion pounds of potatoes lol

Shana Gordner Henry

Thanks folks, it's really nice to hear what people are doing in their kitchens...I like the name "veggie duty." Sounds super useful to cooks and super fun for campers with the right leadership and energy. Kelly, I have messaged you and look forward to that kitchen handbook, thank you :)

Travis Simmons

Every Sunday, our oldest boy and girl cabin spends the afternoon preparing the Sunday dinner. They make homemade pretzels and soup, or pizza. They also decorate the tables in the dining hall (with butcher paper). It's a really cool experience and adds to our belief that our older campers help to take care of our younger ones. The ones making the dinner really enjoy getting to spend the afternoon together making it too!

Jerrold Henoch

Emma, Emily please follow and lets chat about Challah baking for Shabbat

Shana Gordner Henry

Thanks Travis Simmons, that is a great thought to employ the older campers in such a noble endeavor. Funny to hear from you on this FB page...hope to catch up again some day :)

Curt Jackson

Love this idea! I can think back on different cooks the camps I worked at had and some would hate this type of program while others would get a kick out of it.

I worked for one outdoor ed program that had cabin groups take turns washing dishes. Not the same thing, I know, but we (the campers and staff) had so much fun doing it. The campers really enjoyed using the sprayer and commercial dish washer. Something they wouldn't be able to do at home.

Adam Langille

We don't invite campers into our kitchen, but instead set up in our dining hall. I find the kitchen environment a little too high risk for such programs. Especially since our clientele are chronically ill, and we're constantly providing for dietary restrictions and food allergies. I find that the more intimate the class size, the better the program is received. We seem to max out at around 15 participants per class. Over/above that, attention-spans seem to wane. Regarding the veggie prep - I'd be cautious. Campers are very likely to injure themselves during this type of prep. A veggie peeler can completely and easily remove a fingernail or worse. It may seem paranoid, but I'd leave the super-sharp objects and knives in the hands of those trained to handle them; except in cases of more mature groups - and even then under the strict supervision of a professional. If heat-applied cooking is to be done with a class, we use portable butane-canister stoves. (cheap!)

Hey #camppros, A number of us including Travis Allison, Jack Schott, Stacie Simpson, and more will be at #MidStates2015. We should get together for a chat. Last year we did it on Friday or Saturday morning for coffee before sessions started. Who's in?

Jason Smith

I'm not there, but wish I was!

Eli Rolli

I am in!

Cory Harrison

The Friday morning Keynote starts at 8. What about a 7 a.m. gathering outside the coffee shop in the resort. Can you make that Travis Allison and Jack Schott?

Stacie Simpson

Works for me! Good find in the schedule.

Travis Allison

Colette Marquardt is helping us find at time:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/camppros/permalink/1062772883736365/>

Stacie Simpson

Way to not follow directions and use the search feature like Travis is always telling us to do, Cory! Hehehe.

Cory Harrison

Look, I'm a pretty important person and delegate that kind of work out. That guy is getting written up today. You know who you are.

Jack Schott

Laura Kriegel and I are in. Looking forward to finding a time!

Jack Schott

Chris Aderhold will ya'll be at #ACAMidstates2015!?

Stacie Simpson

More importantly, will #KidCampDirector be there?

Chris Aderhold

:) We'll be there - unfortunately, we'll be returning to Camp Gray on Friday evening. Our annual Benefit Dinner is Saturday evening, so we'll need to return to finish preparations. But yeah, we'll be there tomorrow, and most importantly, the #KidCampDirector will be making an appearance and will be excited to compete in lip-sync competitions. :)

Chris Aderhold

(I didn't even realize I just utilized the rarely seen smiley face emoticon book-end on that last post. Good times!)

Jack Schott

Chris Aderhold BIG TIME!

Travis Allison

Ok. 7 am. Friday morning outside the coffee shop

Hey #CampPros - Who's going to be at Mid-States this week?

Kelly Rossebo

I am!

Sarah Kurtz McKinnon

Me! Presenting on Friday and Saturday!

Mary LaVaque

I am!! Presenting on Thursday and Saturday.

Diane Conrad

Wish I were

Andrea J Steffens

Thursday, Friday and Saturday!

Hanna A. Krogmann

Me Wednesday through Saturday

Andrea Groves

There!! So excited!

Tom Miller

Loking forward to your presentations

Stephanie Huber Williams

Wish I were! Everyone have an awesome time!

Matt Henry

Yep. Presenting on... well - I have to find the email...

Tim Nowak

This guy and a vanload from Jameson Camp. Looking forward to it!

Jack Schott

Laura Kriegel and I will see you there!

Kelsey Weitzel

Me as well! And I am presenting on Saturday! Camp Songology!

Jennifer Wesling

Interlochen Arts Camp is bringing 11 from Michigan!

Jen Senti Box

Presenting on Friday morning! :-D Social Media 101

Jennifer H. Selke

Me? Fresh off NAB

Travis Allison

Jennifer H. Selke - I look forward to hearing your NAB story!

Travis Allison

Jen Senti Box - Great topic!

Travis Allison

I was looking for a place in the schedule for a #CampPros breakfast/meetup but the week looks jam-packed! So much good info from dawn to dusk.

Kelsey Weitzel

What about doing an interest group? There are only a couple of those

Colette Marquardt

I'll be there ;)! We will arriving tonight with our giant truck of supplies! Travis Allison - stop by Bourbon Street area sometime on Wednesday and we can help you find a good time for a meet up- we will even help to spread the word. Safe travels everyone!

Travis Allison

Thanks Colette!

Travis Allison

Ok. 7 am. Friday morning outside the coffee shop

Staff Evaluation, this is what i use during mid season, then the end of the summer,, let me know your thoughts

Dave Thoensen

Use something similar, but let the staff eval themselves, 2-3 weeks in. Most of the time they are much more critical than their supervisors.

Charles Giegerich

I do the same then they do it together with a supervisor.

Dave Thoensen

We only do the sit downs with the staff in need of improving performance.

Charles Giegerich

I like to sit down with all the staff, for both positive feedback and areas of improvement

Dave Thoensen

With 160 staff formal sit downs with strong performers can be difficult in a timely manner. Leadership staff is constantly on the move offering feedback. I have found it best for those 10-12 poor performers to really do a sit down to talk about performance but also if this is the right place. Better to recognize and address poor performers early and if needed terminate before they can hurt the program.

Charles Giegerich

I agree with all you said. I have a staff of 30 so it makes my process much easier

Dave Thoensen

Thanks for sharing the eval.

Charles Giegerich

My pleasure. Have a wonderful camp season

Katherine Parnell

Following

Here's how the camp story aired in the Bay Area - fun! Thanks KNTV.
Click here: <https://youtu.be/OgcAfaiWSJs>

I need a couple ice breakers for a weekend FAMILY CAMP
I'm looking forward to your great ideas- Thank you :)

Robert Lawton

Just in luck - here are two:

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

Katie Mac

bingo- where in order to mark the space another person has to sign the space that applies to them.... example- one of the bingo spaces says "has been to Michigan" and if that applies to you, you sign your name in that space. this continues until you get a bingo (certain formations or a cover all etc...) hope this makes sense as it is easier to show u than explain

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

I forgot to mention....we did that one a few times. lol

Allison East

I love the Bingo ice breaker! I also like people to people, where everyone walks around until you yell "people to people: arms!" Then people have to match up with their arms touching. You can call out head, legs, whatever you want. It's active and can be pretty funny!

Kelly Vidovich

Two truths and one fib..everyone has to guess which is the fib :)

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

I like that 2 truths one ^

Robert Lawton

^ me, too! I want to play now!

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

Ready go.

Robert Lawton

OK...

- 1) I own two working Harleys and bits and pieces of others that don't.
- 2) A bunch of friends of mine and I tried breaking the skydiving world record for "world's largest freefall formation" but failed.
- 3) I bicycled 4,000 miles through Europe, Asia, and North Africa before starting college.

Good luck!

Kim Steward Betts

Pass around a roll of toilet paper so people can "take what they need" and then tell a fact about themselves for each square. Or give skittles or M&Ms; and each color is a different thing- fave food, book, place, etc.

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

#1 is a lie

Robert Lawton

OK Kristal Coral Marie Molina, How about... I briefly attended Coronado Village Elementary School where everyone called me Ralph?

Jana Sloupova

Kim Steward Betts - that game with toilet paper is horrible - I don't think it is good icebreaker (I always hated it). But you can play music, people are in circle and they must pass toilet paper really quickly (like it is really hot) and when music stops person who is holding it must select some "dangerous" activity from the bag - like jumping on one leg, or making funny face and so on. Everyone will do that activity for couple of seconds (when music is playing) Then repeat pass the toilet paper, stop, activity,..... - for couple of minutes :))) It is fun and not only people open up but you can learn names, you can see who has some problems and you can work with it :)))

Jana Sloupova

I do magic shows for children and basically good icebreakers are activities where people are moving, screaming, making one special thing all together, making something funny and reacting. You can learn more about person when you see him react and behave when he forget himself than from asking him questions. If you have all family there, then it can be even better - make some competition (kids x adults, girls x boys)...of course kids will win and it will be simple but they will learn about others and be more friendly.

Maddie Wilmes

Captain my captain (also called ship captain). One person is the captain and shouts out commands like hit the deck (lay flat on the ground) and three men in a boat (three people will circle up and start rowing). There's tons of commands, so they need to remember and be the fastest to do the command, otherwise they are out. Last one standing wins

Casey Sukeforth

I really enjoy 'silent line-up', where people can visually learn new things about each other - line up by first name, years at camp, height, age...ect. Giving a time limit makes it slightly chaotic and more fun. Easy and everyone participates. I also enjoy 'associations' where people have to group together based on an answer to a simple question "how many siblings?" "favorite food".

Michael Ohl

Poker Chip Madness: each person gets one poker chip, it lays on the back of a hand (so they cannot grab it). The free hand is the swiper (index finger works like a windshield wiper). That swiper is the only way to knock off a chip. No pushing, no holding the chip against the body, etc. play a few round of everyone against everyone. Then have the chips of similar color be a team that is trying to survive the other colors. Give a time limit and whichever color has the most left after time is up wins.

Michael Ohl

Also always loved the Teamwork & Teamplay deck of cards, lots you can do with them.

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

I have another interesting tidbit. The camp is for deaf and hard of hearing families... And not everyone can sign or hear :) I'm loving these ideas.

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

And it's a Neverland Theme :)

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

Michael Ohl - what are teamwork card games? Do you have a link?

Susana M. Lorance

Hat Trick- everyone in a circle with one hat. Start the hat on one person's head, the hat has to be passed around the circle without using your hands or talking. Also, each person cannot move from their spot in the circle.

Susana M. Lorance

Finger Grab: Get everyone to stand in a circle, with their arms out either side. Tell people to put their left palm up, and right finger pointing down (touching the person next to their outstretched palm).

When you say the word "GO", people need to do two things:

1. Grab the person's finger in your left hand
2. Prevent your right finger from being grabbed

If your finger is grabbed, you are out, and you sit on the sidelines. The game continues until there is a winner.

The key to this game is adding a bit of drama and suspense around when you say "Go". eg count down, add a big delay, etc. You can do it a few times before it gets old :)

Susana M. Lorance

Finger Fencing: In its simplest form two players stand facing each other and clasp their right hands together as if about to arm wrestle. Then on a given command each player extends his index finger (his "lance") and battle commences. The objective is to jab your opponent before he jabs you. At no point may the players' hands lose contact with each other.

Hello!

I am interested in becoming a Real Colors Certified Facilitator in order to enhance staff member's understanding of themselves and each other. I would be doing this during our annual staff training week, and hopefully contract out to other camps and create other programs utilizing the Real Colors temperament assessment. Do any of you have any ideas as to what business or organizations have grants that would support my certification?

Ashley House

I would check with the youth serving organizations in your state. I know in Indiana we have an non-profit that gives \$500 grants to 2 people in any youth serving organization each calendar year. There may be something similar in your state.

If you have ever wanted to learn more about another culture, gain global exposure, or enrich the lives of people around you, then hosting a student is the right thing for you! Hosting means opening your home to a student for a semester or academic year so that they can attend your local high school. Hosting a high school exchange student is a unique opportunity to share your way of life with a young person from another part of the world.

By hosting a student, your family will gain international exposure, increase their desire to travel and to learn about languages, and gain friendships that will last for many years to come.

All types of families, or single adults, are welcome to host a student. We ask that you be at least 25 years old, provide meals for the student, a bed for them to sleep in, a place for them to study, and

reasonable transportation.

Our male and female students come from many different countries in Europe, Asia, Australia, and South America. They have a wide array of interests and are eager to learn our culture and way of life.

If you are interested in learning more about hosting, or know anybody who is, please PM me. I would love to discuss this opportunity with you!

What struck me about this post was the thought that campers may still remember what you did for them in the year 2091.

Maddie Wilmes

I still remember all my counselors when I was a camper and I hope that my campers do the same!

Robert Lawton

I know that some of my photos will long outlast me.

Laura Fuese Hall

one of my staff shared this with me...so great!

Yay camp! :)

Social Media Policy

So, lately I'm being rejected by "Real World Jobs" because I have had "too many jobs"...those being 10 years of seasonal camp jobs. I often switched between Outdoor Education at one camp and summer leadership at another, then back to OE at a different camp that might end in November and not start up again until April so I have to find something else. I've gotten to see the country, but now am shut out of more stable jobs I want to transition into.

My question to anyone who has dealt with this is: "How can I get my valuable experience to shine through the bars of a long list of seasonal jobs on a resume?" :(

Robert Lawton

You might list a single job: "Seasonal Youth Development Professional" rather than all the jobs individually. Within that one job, you can then list each camp and position.

I did this with four internships, and my interviewers never batted an eye.

I should note that I wasn't using "Real World Jobs" when I did this.

Hannah Hudson

That sounds like a great idea, thank you!

And lol at "Real World Jobs". I know it's a designation us camp people despise, but is identifiable

Kelly Rossebo

If I ask myself why that would be a deterrent to me as an employer, I would be questioning why you moved around - so I would address with how your employers felt about you with great reference letters and stress in the interview that you are now looking for a long term

commitment to an organization.

Hannah Hudson

Are reference letters something you could keep copies of for unlimited future use or are you supposed to have the writers write a new one every time? (Always wondered this...)

Robert Lawton

Reference letters should be a direct communication between the recommender and the prospective employer - never to be seen by the candidate. They should also be "fresh". That is, the recommender should reference your current skills, abilities, and experience.

Natasha Marie

Be selective with each job you present on your resume. You can always have different lists for different types of jobs. Highlight the most relevant ones on paper, but feel free to touch upon additional experiences in your interview.

Jennifer Lee

A functional resume that focuses on skills and experiences or a combination resume might be better fit than a chronological resume. Either allow all of your experiences and skills to stand out before the job history. The change of emphasis can hook employers before they look at the dates. I have used these styles when changing functional areas.

James Ralston

I had the same issue. Tell them up front on the resume/app that they were seasonal or grant based of what ever. They were not intended to be long term by design. Then tell them you are ready to settle down and not always be looking for the next job when the season changes.

Tracy Power

That is also what a cover letter is great for. You should be explaining/making a connection between your skills and the job you are applying in the cover letter- so just say something like "through my ten plus years as a seasonal camp professional I learned....."

Chris Cameron

What jobs do you want to transition into?

Misty Dawn Shay-Rivera

I worked at the same camp for two summers in a row and just put June of 2005-August 2006 on my resume... And the same with my school year position August 2003-may 2007 etc. and yes hey overlap but it shows longevity with the same camp or OE school.

Scott Merrow

I invested in a Professional Resume' Writer....she was able to imbed my experience, growth and accomplishments - weaving in quotes from letters of recommendations. It made all the difference.... My resume' showed transition every few years - but spoke to growth and advancement - best money I've ever spent.

Andrea J Steffens

I was thinking maybe tweaking your resume to showcase the qualities of the job instead of it showing the "hoping around" aspect, so I agree with Scott about a professional resume writer if it's feasible for u?

Jonathan Fisher

I agree with professional resume service or even your state job office, i.e. unemployment office. They usually have free classes to help write resumes. My latest updated resume did not list much in the way of companies I had worked for, only skills

Hollie Penuel

A well crafted cover letter can work wonders.

Brittany Verlenich

Chris Cameron asked an important question. Are you applying for a job with a similar culture than seasonal camp jobs? Consider that if an employer doesn't understand or appreciate what you've done, they may not be a good fit for you.

When I was interviewed for the position I currently have (in community/commercial rec as a program coordinator), they also asked about my 'hopping around,' as I also switched between camp leadership and OE (and other random/fun assignments - a camp in Hawaii, a flower farm in Virginia, an OE camp in the Redwoods, all over!). When interviewed, I explained that each position required a unique skill set. I learned quickly and even the act of moving around shows I adjust well, fit into a variety of teams, etc etc. I also put a lot of heart, time and thought into my cover letter, and honesty I think that's what got me the interview.

Best of luck in your job search! =)

Bonner A Davis

I've had the same problem after 30 years. The answer is to create a functional resume rather than a chronological. Group your experience as youth development, outdoor education, leadership, etc. Here's what mine looks like.

Shawna Rau

Instead of making your resume a job based format, make it skill based. I had the same problem as I worked short term contracts for a temp agency. Once I changed formats I landed some great jobs :-)

Rosemary Pezzuto

[Www.seriousjobseeker.com](http://www.seriousjobseeker.com) has great resources for you.

Sorry if I absolutely missed this, buuuuut - who's at the ACA Spring Leadership Conference right now in sunny Palm Springs, California? =)

Dave Malter

I am! Stop by my booth (Touro University) and say hi!

Curt Jackson

I'm here, too.

Gabrielle Coburn

Me too!

Brittany Verlenich

Curt Jackson your roundtable session was awesome! I only wish we had more time. And Gabrielle Coburn, I think you were in my group!

A couple of CampHacker Podcasts might help with getting ready for the summer:

- In The Gloaming: Planning the Perfect Campfire - CampHacker #79

<http://camphacker.tv/podcast/2015/3/in-the-gloaming-planning-the-perfect-campfire-camphacker-79>

- Spice Up Your Dining Room - CampHacker #78

<http://camphacker.tv/podcast/2015/2/spice-up-your-dining-hall-camphacker-78>

- Balancing Camp & The Rest of Your Life - CampHacker #77

<http://camphacker.tv/podcast/2014/11/balancing-camp-the-rest-of-your-life>

Good to listen to while spring cleaning your camp office!

Hi there! For any camps who incorporate orienteering into their program - is there a specific place or company you buy compasses from in bulk? Ones that are affordable but that work well?

Ian Roberts

Hey Carolyn, you are definitely not needing anything more than a basic compass for an orienteering course. Sign your camp up for Pro Purchase at Liberty Mountain and you will get some great deals. We use Suunto A-10 compasses, but a great low cost option would be the Silva Starter or Polaris. With the Pro deal, they would only be around \$7 each. Thanks! www.libertymountain.com

Ken Laing

Been awhile but I but from campmor.com was happy with them

Lori Rosene

Ian Roberts the site indicates you can't purchase for an outdoor program and equipment may only be purchased for personal use.... Am I reading this correctly or in the wrong place?

Ian Roberts

Hi Lori Rosene, i'm not sure?? I would give them a call directly. We most definitely use it for our camp program which covers multiple locations in several states. They may set you up with a different account to allow you to purchase for a program. We also spend \$20k per year in supplies from them.

Lori Rosene

That could very well be the reason :)

Ian Roberts

I dont think so, I do know of other smaller programs that take advantage of LM pricing and make gear purchases for their program. Wouldn't hurt to inquire with them.

Carolyn Ruether

Thanks for these links guys!

Lori Rosene

Thanks....That certainly is a great price for compasses

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

We worked with a local orienteering group and they volunteered their time/supplies

Hello. Our summer camp is looking for a yurt. Any hints on a good supplier in US (we are located in Maine). Yurt would welcome 10 kids. Idea about the right sizing? Thanks.

Joe Richards

We bought one last summer from <http://www.groovyyurts.com/en/> about 16 feet works for a group of 10. They are based out of Montreal.

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

We got ours a few years ago from Pacific yurts in Oregon. Good customer service! We have for 30ft yurts with 24 beds each. Pay attention to getting one with multiple exits for code purposes!

Frank Fagan

Check out Colorado Yurt Company... several colleagues have purchased through them, all giving excellent feedback. They can also be found at numerous ACA conferences, so they're heavily involved in camping. www.coloradoyurt.com/

Jeff Hoeben

For those of you with Yurts on your property what did your local building inspector classify them as? Or, did you not bother to tell him/her that you were putting one up. We are getting the run- around and they want us to get state approval in WI before proceeding.

Toni Davison Levenberg

Pacific Yurts

Adam Delezenne

Suzanne Getz Bates?

Fair warning: shameless self promotion! (This is only my second one of these since shifting to a supporting role in the camp community so I feel like I'm still within my quota.)

I'm adding photography to my professional services and would love to get out to some camps this summer. The strength of your storytelling the rest of the year will be defined by the images you capture this summer. If you don't already have a plan to build a stock of professional images of your programs this summer then drop me a line, I would love to help!

Robert Lawton

"Video (or photos) or it didn't happen." Ever hear that?

There's a recent thread where we're talking about how difficult it is to communicate "camp" to non-campers. They just don't get it.

Photography (videography) helps people "get it" like nothing else.

Great staff training opps - spaces still available! Sign up Today!

Looking for a positive and energetic part-time cook to make healthy and nutritious meals for our campers at Camp Glacier Hollow in Nelsonville, WI (Central WI)! Job description attached, contact

Tiffany Praeger if interested!

Hey Folks-

You've gotta try this! Campers have been playing this game (Flimsee Cups) at Fairview Lake YMCA Camps during the past several summers, and our campers and staff can't get enough of it. It's ideal for Color Wars, Camp Olympics, and as a program activity.

Enter the discount code (summercamp) at checkout (www.flimsee.com) and receive \$10 off.

If someone called and asked if a high school boy who has been convicted of a sexual offense can attend camp, what would you say? I received this call the other day. Full disclosure: I don't know the person in question, nor the offense, and I've never received a call like this before. Our camp doesn't have a stated policy regarding CAMPERS who have a criminal background. I want this kid to experience camp, but I fear the liability factor just went through the roof because someone made me aware of this.

Andy Rosenhauch

Not sure how to go about it, but I don't think camp is the right place for him. Unless it's a camp dedicated to such kids. As a father, I would not want to risk my son or daughter being at camp in that situation. Though my heart goes out to the troubled kid, a dedicated program is what is needed.

Angela E. Arneal

Would you want your kid there with that kid? No. I would suggest a youth camp that specializes on that type of thing.

Jennifer H. Selke

How would you know if any of your campers have a conviction?

Mary M Siniard

Is that legal?

Joel Whitehead

I wouldn't. We don't typically ask that type of question. I only know in this case because someone who mentors this boy called to ask if we would allow a camper who has a conviction like this. I don't even know his name yet, so at this point it is merely a question.

Cori Jacobs Welbes

Often times this type of youth would require a safety plan based on his conviction. My guess is that he is in the system and there are legal guidance and parameters on his ability to be with other youth that has been court designated. Do your research on other alternatives for the mentor to contact. Your first and foremost responsibility is to the rest of your camp community. Would you let a fire starter come to your camp?

Shawn Moriarty

Can you find out what the offense was? Exposure, sexual assault, possession of child material? It might not matter, and I think it is important to have all the relevant info before making a choice. Is it worth talking to your board? How old is the camper?

Laura Fuese Hall

I think if you are informed and accept him, you are taking on some risk. If you did not know, there is no liability for you. I would consult your legal resources to confirm.

Joe Fortin

Sounds like a great question for your legal counsel.

Julie Keats Stoelzel

Unless it is disclosed you wouldn't know if any campers have been convicted of a sexual offense, they are clearly making the disclosure by inquiring. Sounds like this child needs a therapeutic camp that has the proper supervision and supports for the behavior(s). I am sure no parent (myself included) would want their child exposed to any type of camper or staff who had been adjudicated for any sexual crime. I would present the question to your lawyer.

Joel Whitehead

Thanks, everyone! Very helpful insight. I have talked to our board and others who I trust, but I was just curious if there is an insight out there I've overlooked.

Catt Durkin

I think that you need more information Like Shawn has said and once you do if you feel they could be at camp then also talking with your board.

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

Had a similar situation last summer. The answer I was given by my org was that since it was disclosed, I needed to act (in this case, by sending him home, no matter how painful that was for the "do-gooder " in me.)

Scottie Roach

Challenging situation

Brian Rybak

This is definitely a challenging dilemma. As a high school teacher, a camp LTP unit head, and someone who has taught an Alternative Program for expelled students, the description of being convicted of a "sexual offence" is very vague. While that is a serious conviction, I had a former student who was expelled for "panting" (pulling down the pants of a fellow student) a student in class and was criminally charged and convicted.

While I do not want to make light of that, as it is quite serious, it is still very different than sexual assault or rape!

I think clarification, if possible, is important. Btw, I also say this as the father of 2 young daughters, so I also understand and respect everyone's fear or apprehension. Just another opinion.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

I had this situation happen last summer. I got the phone call when I was away from camp doing an ACA accreditation visit. LOL It turned out that when we spoke to the child's social worker, the offense in question that he was attending counseling for was because he pinched a girl's butt. Was it inappropriate to pinch a girl's butt? Absolutely yes it was, however his social worker was able to tell us that he was actively participating in the group sessions he was required to attend. This 15 year old DID come to his camp session and he did a great job. Sexual offense sounds very scary until you dig a bit deeper. We wouldn't always know... but in this case we did and digging deeper made all the difference. I was

confident enough in the decision of the social worker, his after-school program provider and also with the blessing of our attorney to have him at camp for the week.

Cohen Pushor

I agree with others who have said that more details would be essential. In a lot of cases I think the liability for you is far too much. That said there are something like twelve states where public urination convictions require registration as a sex offender. It would be unfortunate to take away a kids ability to reap the benefits of camp because of something simple and relatively harmless.

Caterina Kolkman Maw

I think you need more info like others have said. Because it could be a kid who let's say is 16 that had consensual sex with his girlfriend who is 14. Parents find out get mad file rape charges. Because girl is under 16 legally (Montana) can't consent to sex. Boy is now charged & is convicted of a sexual crime. This happens. Know a couple kids this happened too. Its the same though with any crime. Find out the legalistic aspects behind the conviction before making a decision. That way its an educated decision.

Jerry Huncosky

Would you hire a counselor in that same position? Probably not. Your responsibility is to your entire camp population and that should not be risked for one child.

Brian Rybak

I think the main problem is with the term "sexual offence". Obviously this has been proven to mean several different things above, and while none of those are to be taken lightly, many of these should not prevent a child from a positive, and possibly learning, experience. However, if the offence was of a more serious, violent, or dangerous nature, then they should probably not be at this camp, and may be better served at a camp for behavioural or mental health issues.

Andy Rosenhauch

Here's the thing, things happen at camp no matter what precautions we make. The question is, if something sexually did happen involving this kid, how would u deal with parents when it comes out that u knew there was a risk? Joel, where u with me that summer when we had the high schooler (Elite) with pot and we gave him grace and parents freaked out?

Amanda Grassick

I echo that it is worth finding out more. If the question has been posted to you its appropriate to ask for more info. As some people have pointed out sexual offense could mean a whole bunch of different things. I know someone who has an assault with a weapon conviction for throwing a pie at the premier of Alberta. One can argue the merits of this type of action but a pieing is probably not the first thing you would think of when you hear assault with a weapon.

Don't jump to conclusions about the type of program this kids needs without asking more about the kid.

Joel Whitehead

I thought I'd fill folks in on the final answer to this question. I just called our insurance company, and they pretty much made the decision for me. In our liability policy we have whats called a Known Predator Exclusion, so basically if we willingly accept anyone into our programs who later causes harm, we are automatically excluded from coverage by our insurance company. It goes without saying we cant take that type of risk. I am hoping I can help his social worker find a more appropriate setting for him to be in. We can't discard kids

like this in society, but obviously some venues will be better than others!

The importance of getting staff on board with our mission.

Ok, hitting a brick wall on my brainstorming today. Anyone have some great ideas for a Splash Camp for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders? It's ANYTHING dealing with water and I'm trying to think of some new and unique on-camp activities. We've done creekstomping, water science, river tubing, and Water Olympics at the pool in the past for some examples of what we've already done. Anyone have some different ideas? I love the creativity in this group so I'm looking forward to your responses!

Abbie Orozco

Giant slip n slide is always popular!

April Keighan

If you have a volleyball net, cover with tarps, grab a ton of water balloons and have a real life version of battleship! HUGE hit at our camp.

April Keighan

Also...extreme bubbles...using kiddie pools and hula hoops. Kids can stand in the pools and make bubbles around their bodies.

Cortney Tyger

Speaking of water balloons, anyone tried this contraption yet?
<http://bunchoballoons.com/?variant=789415091>

April Keighan

Oh! One more! (Water themes get me raring to go!) hydrogel beads in different colours. Kids and staff alike will play with them for hours. A great sciencey/rainy day learning activity. You don't need a lot cause they expand a lot, and if you're super resourceful, you can find them for cheap! I get them locally for about .50 cents a package.
OK! I'm done now

Jenna Caldwell Campbell

Jesse Thompson - thought Keri might like to see this for the water camp this summer!

April Keighan

I saw that contraption and was going to contribute to this crowd sourcing campaign! Are they for sale now?!?

Ettie Cohen

What are hydrogel beads?

Robert Lawton

Water rockets

April Keighan

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=piz83W11rlw>

Cortney Tyger

No, I just did the \$17 donation thingy so we'll see what happens!

Marni Katz

synchronized swimming

Cortney Tyger

Robert Lawton- do you have a good water rocket plan?

Robert Lawton

Nope. I just like water rockets. The general idea is that kids decorate 2 liter pop bottles and then take turns launching them. You can turn it into a STEM activity by

- calculating height
- estimating the relationship between PSI and height
- estimating the relationship between amount of water used and height
- study aerodynamics

Cortney Tyger

Do you use plastic bottles and an air compressor? That's what I've done in the past. Do you do something similar/different?

Robert Lawton

Plastic bottles and a bicycle pump along with a launch contraption. It wasn't my activity, so I don't know all the details. I can tell you the camera settings to use if you want to photograph it, though :-)

Hannah Hudson

Meg Harrison-Moss! Read above for an awesome idea: water balloon battleship!

JonandEmily Isaman

Here ya go, just built two yesterday:
<http://www.thisoldhouse.com/toh/how-to/overview/0,,20258045,00.html>

Diane Conrad

Tug of war through a mud puddle... alka selzer in film canisters with paper rocket on outside...

Heather Slimp

We did a mini-mudder obstacle course- campers had to swing over a kiddie pool, crawl through tubes with water in them, go over hay bails into a "mud pit", crawl over huge tractor tires, slip-n-slid mud style, etc. We didn't want to dig huge holes into the ground so our mud pits were tarps covered in mud.

Heather Slimp

We have also done a structure challenge. Campers were given a small tarp, 3 poles, and rope and had to build a structure that could withstand water being poured onto it.

Robert Lawton

Oh! Cardboard regatta! Use boxes and duct tape to build and race boats.

Lisa MacQuarrie

Cassandra Dietrich new ideas, especially battleship!

Jana Sloupova

Do someone know ho ecologically friendly are those polymer balls? And what to do with them after we dont need them anymore?

Janet Keilen

How about a giant slingshot and water gallons?

Where do you order mops and brooms from, any good places with bulk rates?

Someone earlier was asking about garden curriculum. I posted this quote in our camp's garden, but it was with a different picture. I recommend stuff like this to relate things learned in the garden/nature to real life/inner practices.

I have a nephew that was recently diagnosed with muscular dystrophy. His mother wants him to attend a camp for children with his same disease. I was wondering if anybody offers a session for this or something similar. If you don't host one at your camp, I'd love if you might be able to point me in a helpful direction! Thanks so much!

Hollie Penuel

The Muscular Dystrophy Association hosts weeklong camps across the country. I would encourage you to connect with the MDA office in your area to find the camp that is closest to you.

Dan Weir

Levi, I'm happy to connect with you.

Hello all! We use standard "Bear" recurve bows for our archery program. We're in search of quality arrows in which the fletching will not fall off easily... suggestions please!

Michael Johnson

Are you looking for recurve or compound? Genesis Bows are very good camp bows. Outdoor Mountain Products also have very good recurve bows.

Mary McSherry

Thanks Michael. We're in such of quality arrows.

Zack Bear

Unfortunately, with bows like that, the fletching takes more of a beating than usual, so even the best arrows will lose fletching faster. My recommendation is regular, cheap, fiberglass camp arrows and a fletching jig with an archery instructor who can spend a few free periods maintaining their equipment.

Michael Johnson

You can also get arrows with rubber fletching, they last forever

Harrison Gabe

You can troll Ebay for cheap student arrows. At my last camp, I scored 75 Bear Safety Glass arrows for \$150 on Ebay from an archery shop that was closing down.

Just doing a quick search on ebay now I came across sets of 12 arrows for ~\$30 each which is not a bad deal.

http://www.ebay.com/itm/Fibreglass-Archery-Arrows-For-Leisure-Recurve-Bows-Safety-Tip-/360854147036?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_3&var=&hash=item5404954fdc

Michael Landry

Hall's Arrow has a full range of equipment and sells at a deep discount to summer camps

Luke Williams

Fiberglass arrows are defiantly the way to go for a easy going camp setting. This 72 pack worked great and was affordable.

http://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B001SH3O8Y?psc=1&redirect;=true&ref;_oh_aui_detail page_o02_s04

Luke Williams

These knocks are also perfect for teaching kids how to properly align the arrow.

http://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B001QD8YJ4?psc=1&redirect;=true&ref;_oh_aui_detail page_o02_s02

Rich Rinaldi

Arrows have been pretty reliable. No arrow is GREAT for the budget we have but these have lasted us about six months of heavy use with 18 targets.. <http://naspschools.org/>

Raya Irene Rose

I find that the metal arrows last much longer than fiberglass. In my experience, if the fiberglass arrows ever hit a hard surface, like the target supports, the fiberglass shatters.

I'm looking for empty lanyard spools. The small black spools. I got a few from my arts and crafts. Would anyone have some they can send me?

Hanna A. Krogmann

I don't have any right now... However I'm really interested in what your using these for since during the summer we have a lot of them.

Paul Schoen

I use them to store my paracord on I make lots of cool stuff with paracord and could use a few more since I have more colors then spools right now. Check out Paul's Ropes Works

Something to teach wilderness survival campers

Ben Forbes

I've actually tried this on my own you'll burn yourself if you don't cut it right so you might wanna have some precut exactly to the correct size

Larry Johnson

ok, thats pretty cool for survival!

Brendan Vaughan

The thinner the better! For once lol

Jana Sloupova

Unfortunately we dont have this kind of cheving gum anymore :(AND you usually dont have spare battery and cheving gum in your pocket when you need it :))) But other than that it is good knowledge :)))

River Edge Farm

Glenna Grey

Benjamin Esposito

One of my favorite firestarting tips is to use Doritos for kindling. Totally a lifesaver in wet conditions, and bonus, you can eat the rest!

Ben Forbes

My personal favorite is fire by friction!

Ashley Powell

Thank you!!!! Although i think my 4th-6th grade campers may be too young for this, I want to do it for the junior high camp!

Dave Hennessey

Andrew Jeremy voila, the video you have been watching is making the rounds!

Marilyne Jones

This would be great for our Outdoor Campers

Camp Eagle Ridge Staff Evaluation Matrix

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Kelly, this is great! Thank you so much for sharing.

Hey guys- first off, I'm new to the group and it's been great to see a positive community at work supporting each other. My creativity has been sparked in a lot of ways, so thank you! In any case- I'm looking for summer staff. I'm in between Nashville and Memphis in TN. For anybody in that area, what's the best way for you to recruit staff? I'm having a freakishly low applicant rate. Staff retention is super high, but I need some fresh applicants and I can't seem to find any...

Ashley House

I have heard lots of camps offer referral incentives. Tell you staff if they recommend a friend who gets hired they get some sort of a bonus (cash, extra staff shirt, doesn't matter) and some will give another bonus if they last the full summer.
This works well because your staff typically won't put their name on the line for friends they know will come and blow it for them.
Good luck!!

Does anyone have a form/questionnaire they use when talking with parents of campers with special needs? We are trying to determine if we are the right fit for an interested family. Thanks!

I am sure that this has been asked and answered; but I am looking for a training design about Bullying / Prevention / Coping (for staff working with pre-school aged and elementary school aged kids!). Any suggestions would be fantastic. Thank you!

Whats your camps Hammock policy?

Derek Bergman

Treeboats from NewTribe are better. Only tie to live trees

Nathan Charles

This looks like it can be avoided by proper staff training.

Robert Lawton

This can be avoided by removing dead trees from the property.

Carolina Navarro

Marit Rannei Olsen

Travis Allison

Matthew Clay Janeway - this raises a bigger issue (h/t to Robert Lawton). On wooded properties there is a big risk that we often ignore - dead or dangerous trees. In Ontario a rec program was successfully sued because they didn't take proper care of their trees and a falling limb killed a child.

I know that there was also a death last year at a camp in the US northeast so I suspect that liability expectation is coming to all camps.

It was definitely a multi-year project for us (and one made financially possible by the donations of a volunteer who is a qualified tree trimmer) but we have been able to reduce the dead and dangerous trees in the most heavily travelled area of camp.

I also took a day-long course on "dead and dangerous" tree identification so that I could plan and prioritize the trimming/cutting

Matthew Clay Janeway

Yep. The BSA lables those as widow makers. As part as the NCAP (national campscool accreditation process) they go thru and look for dead trees and we can fail accreditation if we don't remove the dead trees. Through out the summer we go through and evaluate if there are any more dead trees on camp. After that we have our BSA CERTIFIED chainsaw operator remove the dead trees.

Ben Smoky Radley

For those of you lobbying for removing 100% of dead trees and limbs from the property, a 'devil's advocate' thought. How big is your property? Some camps have less than 30 acres. Others more than 1200. It seems to me that:

A. There has to be a distinction drawn between main programming areas, and the forest.

B. There has to be an understanding there is no way to Eliminate the risk when working in a forest. You can and should manage it, through management of the trees and the program, but there is simply no way to eliminate the risk all together.

Just my 2 cents.

Robert Lawton

Speaking of the BSA, a father was killed in his tent by a tree limb in a camp north of St. Louis just a few years ago. Very sad. I agree with Ben Smoky Radley, of course. You have to prioritize: activity areas, sleeping areas, trails should get top priority.

On related note, I got hit by a tree much like the one in the video. They're extremely heavy, and if I hadn't seen it at the last second, I'd be a lot shorter.

Looking for marketing ideas, moved our camp to a new town. Trying to get the word out to as many potential families as possible. Any ideas would be greatly appreciated!

Kelly Rossebo

Contact your local tv station to do a story.

River Edge Farm

support your local school fundraisers

Andrea Suzanne

If your local schools put on plays or musicals, running an ad in the programs might help spread the word.

Younes Haimani

Community event at camp with all the above ideas.

So one of my campers asked me if we could do this during the summer. This is why I love my job. But anyone know where I can buy these twister mats in bulk.

Anna Charlotte

Could you just get a load of white wipe clean table cloths, and make your own? I might try :)

Anna Charlotte

Laura Edwards

Colleen McGourley

I was thinking that but if I can get the plastic ones I would be able to wash them off with water and reuse again

Anna Charlotte

You should be able to get table cloths that are resilient enough for that. I'm gonna look into it! :D

Lisa Berggren

Use marking paint and create your own giant lawn twister board

Dan Baer

Alibaba

Tink Rabey-Hall

Have anyone who can do Tag Sales/Garage Sales for you this spring? Almost every time we go out or send someone out we come back with two or three Twister Games -- generally cost anywhere from .25 to at the most \$1. :)

Maxwell Johnson

We used white paper plates, worked great!

Rosemary Wine Gustin

Just use white or clear shower curtains! They'll stand up to many washings!

Colleen McGourley

Great idea Rosemary.

Mike Smith

That is awesome.

Christie Peterson

We made our own on the lawn...worked great! This looks like a fun "twist" on an old game!

Lori Rosene

We used paint on the lawn also during a giant games week.

Mal R

Clear heavy duty shower curtain. Paint the circles on the back for long lasting. Play with paint on the front.

Valerie Daniels

Laura can we do this for staff week....

Stephanie Huber Williams

Puts a new twist on color wars. Savanah Morin Standifer

Laura Fuese Hall

Valerie Daniels Yes!

Dianne Chamberlain

MB Sullivan, Nikki Bell, Daria Warnecke York, great ideas!

Jill Persichetti Makkay

Nick Pincin

Debbie Wade Nickerson

We use a large tarp and make an oversized board. No need for colored circles- the blobs of paint work just fine.

Morgan Tebeau

I like what you did there Stephanie Huber Williams ;-)

Ettie Cohen

I'm trying to figure this out- as they play they get full of the paint?

Carolina Navarro

Marit Rannei Olsen

Hey Ya'!!! This will be my first year as the Staff Director, and I wanted to see if anyone had any good Evaluation form that they evaluate their staff with. I would love to see what ya'll use! Thanks

Victoria Hoppes

I can email you ours. PM me to where you would like it sent.

Brigid Mejia

@victoria hoppes I would love to see what you use too please. Brigid@arfoundation.org

Kelly Rossebo

I love ours. I would be happy to email it to anyone that wants to pm me their email address.

Michael Petitpas

Summer camp isn't like a normal workplace. First, your employees are probably mostly youth. Second, your season is wrapped up in a couple months. So the purpose and utility is different than a long term job.

Lori Rosene

Any chance you could post in the files section of this group?

Alan Munshower

we do a mid-summer and end of summer eval. Staffers also do a self eval using the same form. The goal is to have their coordinator compare forms with them, to open a dialogue about what they see as their strengths vs what their coordinator sees. Mid-summer is key for giving them the feedback needed to get them to a good place by end of summer, and set them up to return the next year

Hollie Penuel

Michael Brandwein has a cool spin on staff evals. He calls it CDOS - Continual Development Of Skill. It focuses on what the staff is already doing well, and one thing they can do even better. We adopted CDOS, in addition to our mid-summer and end of summer formal evaluations.

Hannah Terpstra

Kristyn Mackenzie: might be of interest to you! :)

Kelly Rossebo

I put our evaluation in the FILES on this page for all to use and enjoy! Best wishes!

Dustin Handrich

Caleb, get in touch with me, my Summer camp Eval it's where the pali eval stemmed from

Awesome #summer #camp #flyer for upcoming summer.....

How is this?!!

Jerrold Henoch

Check out www.canva.com for awesome, free and easy graphic design templates

We're looking for a year-round Assistant Camp Director to bring the "WOW"

<http://jobview.monster.com/Assistant-Camp-Director-Director-of-Youth-Family-Services-Job-Margate-City-NJ-US-148286837.aspx?mescoId&jobPosition;=1>

Drew FlynnDavis

Harrison

"Stop trying to explain 'the magic of camp' to your non-camp friends. They will NEVER understand. When people ask "How was your summer?", simply say "Great, how was yours?" Trying to explain the 'magic' of camp will only diminish the experience and it won't seem as great." I live by this simply so I won't be disappointed when others don't 'get it'. If they are a camp person, I simply have to say I spent the summer at camp and they will get it.

-SGM

Jerry Huncosky

Bad advice, if we all quit talking about the magic of camp, the magic starts to diminish and our best marketing tool goes away. The magic of camp lies in the relationships and the experiences and gets shared and relived through the passion in our voices. I say, keep telling the stories and sharing the experiences and let the world know your summer was better than any summer the non camp person could ever imagine.

Ashley House

I know for me its not possible to not talk about camp. Others may not understand the experience, but they definitely understand the emotion around my experience. I have parents send their kids to my camp simply because of the passion and excitement I show with someone mentions camp. Maybe we do not need to explain the magic, but we do need to share the magic so it continues.

Camp Gallahue

I think I know what Stephen Maguire trying to say. I am sure he didn't mean not to talk about camp!

Bill Waite

blargh

Stephen Maguire

Thanks Jerry Huncosky. I amended it a little bit. Cool mustache :)

Sarah Anne Facey

Sorry Stephen Maguire I'm going to have to challenge you on this. If you use this logic, then we should never talk with others about travelling, volunteer experiences, inspiring speakers, educational experiences. I'm a better person for listening and learning about my loved ones, friends and even acquaintances experiences. We are in the business of growing great people, and that shouldn't just be limited to 18 and under.

Brittany Verlenich

Word, Sarah Anne Facey Also, you never know who's listening! Maybe your genuine enthusiasm will encourage them to send their kid to camp, even though they've never experienced it

Something to keep in mind as you think about camp programming and marketing. Most families (north of 80%) struggle with the challenges described here.

Thanks to Denice Ross, Presidential Innovation Fellow and mom of 4, whose interview with CampEasy airs on NBC nationwide today.

Interview here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BP_bUyQ6iY

We are still seeking OUTDOOR PURSUITS staff for 4 and 6 month contracts at Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta's Camp Kindle! Interested, or know somebody who might be interested? Check out our postings and pass them on!

We are looking to revamp our parent communication this summer and are looking for some help. Traditionally we send camp evaluations out to parents every other week during the camp season. Generally parents enjoy the updates and the review on how their child is doing. However, the quality of the write ups vary significantly from one cabin counselor to the next. We also have them write them since they don't have computer access while at camp - which increases handwriting issues and grammatical errors. We don't want to eliminate this service for our parents but need to figure out a way to insure quality. I would love to know what other camps do. Thanks!

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Do counselors have the ability to complete online forms on their phones, tablets, etc??

Robert Lawton

As a parent, I've found it obvious when a leader is filling out a standard-format letter and when they are composing one of their own. I treasure the latter.

Suggestion: don't tell me what my child liked/disliked. They'll tell me that. Instead tell me an anecdote that I won't hear from them. It's the stories that are the keepers, and unless you're running an Advance Placement preparation camp, my spelling and grammar expectations aren't very high.

Gene Devlin

Alicia DeHart Theriault that is an interesting question. I suppose they could do on phones and tablets but it might be cumbersome but worth considering. Thanks

Gene Devlin

Robert Lawton good points, makes me think, thanks!

Natasha Marie

Would phone calls be a possible alternative?

Robert Lawton

You might also make parent letters part of the job interview process. Give the candidate your requirements and have them prepare a letter.

- you can test the clarity of your instructions
 - you can evaluate their writing skills
 - and this will impress upon them letter writing's importance
-

We are a small camp of approximately 40 - 70 campers and 30 staff per week for 5 weeks. We are looking at alternative ways to reduce our trash output, including the weight of the bags our staff have to lift. Do you have any suggestions or things that work in your kitchen? We are looking into recycling, which we don't do currently. Do you do anything creative with your food waste besides composting?

Travis Allison

We found a local farmer who came and got our waste every other day - he fed it to his pigs.

Alicia DeHart Theriault

We have pigs on the property. Last summer we had 6 pigs and they are all of our food waste- total population of 350 people. (Just to give a reference point for animals v. food waste ratio).

Linda Archer

That's what I'm looking into right now. Calling the USDA extension office to figure out how to find a farmer.

Dave Hennessey

Jessica This is how to justify your pig

Sookie King

We are a Wilderness Art Camp specializing in art through recycling, repurposing, reusing. Nothing is trash for us! We compost food and almost everything else is used as art materials! PM me if you'd like some ideas!

Linda Archer

Thanks! I was thinking the pig route. Those camps that do this, does the farmer come and pick up the slop or do y'all take it to him? How is it transported? Sookie King, I'll PM you.

Linda Archer

Also, I'm looking for ideas of exactly what you use in your kitchen to collect trash? Large (60 gal) trash cans? Small cans? Somoe other sort of system?

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Dave Hennessey YAS!! Hillary Danielle

Alicia DeHart Theriault

We use 5 gallon buckets for food scraps, large 60 gal trash cans for trash, and we have 20 gal recycling bins for recyclables. We have at least two buckets for food scraps per meal and about 5 trash bins and recycling containers. The kitchen staff are responsible for emptying trash bins. Maintenance staff take food scraps to the pigs following each meal. And we have CITs and staff volunteers who are on the "green team" who empty recycling bins after each meal. This makes it a full community initiative, rather than putting the full load onto the kitchen staff.

Jeremy Meade Culpepper

We leaned that campers were putting more food on their plates than they could eat, and just throwing a lot of it away. = WASTE. A program has been since developed to weigh food waste and to make it a competition to see who has the least weight per cabin, and also having an entire session have less waste than another session. There has been significantly less waste.

Alex Mellor

Michael Bednarz, we should get pigs!

Al Ferreira

Check if there is a local pig farmer who will come collect your food scraps

Al Ferreira

Have a contest I dining hall to have table with least amount of waste - and make portions smaller or have kids take less and go back for 2nds with smaller portions - weigh the waste and get them all helping to reduce as well

Amanda Grassick

Pigs are great... unless you live in an area with bears or other large predators. The first camp I worked at had pigs for years and ate the food scraps for 750+ people. Then the wildlife corridor was pushed towards us because of development (mostly fancy condos and new golf courses) about 60 kms. All of a sudden we had bears walking through our property all the time. Which was not a huge deal except for the compost pigs. The smell was a big attractant to the bears. And no one needs to see the pig carnage that bear can cause.

If bears or other large predators aren't a concern than pigs are the ticket.

FYI - pigs actually sunburn quite easily and need to be provided with shade and sometimes sunscreen.

Elizabeth Monica

The camp I worked at started using some of the food waste as compost took start growing flowers, herbs, and vegetables. This was also a great way to show kids where food comes from (not a grocery store). We also started a program in which all food wastes were put into a bucket that was weighed each week to show the campers how much food they waste. In a few weeks the amount of waste decreased and it made our campers really proud.

Lori Rosene

I use 20 gallon trash cans in the kitchen because of the weight. Even you you caution staff about checking the weight.... They always seem to go the "full" route. So now full is just smaller. Also use 20 gallon in the dining room. Also keeps flies and other pests a little more under control because bags are changed more frequently. BTW I serve about 30 staff and 50-100 campers over 6 1/2 weeks.

Lori Rosene

We reuse containers a lot. Use #10's for everything from fire buckets to candle dipping to individual paint buckets when you have 5 gallon paint buckets. Plastic, tin, and cardboard are all recycled. Composting not an option because of bear country. Previous incident with campers eating out of the "waste" can at the table so they could win keeps me from pursuing that option.

Linda Archer

Yea, we already have about all the #10s we can handle scattered around camp. :) I'm trying to get with our county recycling center to see what options we have for recycling since we are a business.

Tom Horner

Talk to Danny Sudman.

Lori Rosene

We are too remote for our waste management to do anything. We rinse/wash everything and haul it a couple times a summer.

Amanda Grassick

Not sure if there is an option in the states but in Canada there is a company called TerraCycle. They allow you to collect hard to recycle items (like coffee pods), you ship them for free and get a credit. Might be worth checking out for larger camps/outdoor centers, etc.

Marie Wixner

We reduced our waste greatly when we switched from plates to cereal bowls only at our salad bar for both staff and campers. We were always taking more than we could eat on a plate and our staff just make 2 trips when needed.

Danny Sudman

I recommend starting with a waste audit. As reflected in the comments there are many solutions to reduce waste stream. #greencampsinitiative

Laura Petersen

Jeremy Meade Culpepper Do you have a writeup of what your waste competition/program looks like?

What I see is : Profile of a Modern Summer Camp Professional. So many similarities.

Brittany Verlenich

Truth. Does anyone else feel like they fail at something everyday? I feel like such a noob all the time

Morgan Tebeau

Of course Brittany! I also feel like I'm always learning and growing...that's the magic of our jobs. I love that it will never be stagnant.

After replacing about 70 bunk mattresses this Spring, we will have about 100 used camper mattresses that we're looking to re-purpose. Many organizations cannot or will not take them in the condition they are in.

Thoughts on an interesting use at camp: giant wall, platform, archery targets? Would love to hear a brainstorm on this or something others have tried. Thx.

Beca Franca

<https://youtu.be/K7T-0IM5KYw> DO THIS

Mike Moose Greenfield

landing mats for a bouldering or climbing wall, sleep out in the field mats, princess & the pea skit, padded cell (kidding mostly)

James Davis

Beca is a notorious lover of mattress dominoes.

I'd also recommend mattress sledding.

Set out a big tarp on a hill, cover it with sudsy water, and use the mattresses as a sled for your slip and slide.

Amanda Dotson

You could make a crash mat of sorts. You'd get that stuffing out, chop 'em up and re stuff a larger bag- Think giant bean bag. Whether you do this for staff in the lounge, your CIT lodge or as a sensory element for the camp industries influx of campers with autism- you'll find you love it! My former camp had two crash mats that we purchased and they were FABULOUS.

Ange Atkinson

Create a free play area and put those in - great for fort building!!!

Mary Beth

we taped the mattresses together and put a plastic tarp over them, and made a slip and slide down a hill for the campers!

James Davis

Tarp ON the mattresses is a fine idea, MaryBeth Tew! Less tarp-burn!

Jason Rich

We do fort building as an activity with them

Sarah Bell

We use them around trees close to our tobogganing hill. And around the basket ball poles which becomes our broomball court in the winter.

You could take the foam out, cut them up, and use them as sponges for sponge/water games!

Preston Podolske

you could use them as mats in a rifle/shotgun range if you have one

Katie Steele

Mattress sledding!

Gary Tublin

line a waterslide

Kelsey Weitzel

You can keep some to play 4 mattresses :)

Alicia DeHart Theriault

I have heard of people cutting the foam up into dish-sponge size and using the little "sponges" for water fights instead of balloons, paint "bombs" for splatter painting, etc.

Natasha Marie

Perhaps an animal shelter could take them?

Curt Jackson

Use for mattress relays.

Beth Kuehn Ehlers

A homeless shelter wouldn't take them?

Curt Jackson

Or, for crash mats under your Homemade Bungee Bullride.

Elizabeth Monica

We used them at our pool and lake as mates for people to lay out on.

Pam Tracz

use them for an all camp activity. have each cabin/" group come up with an activity to do using the materials.

Robert Lawton

Human sized domino pieces. I'd use a fat Sharpie to put the dots on. You might be able to turn dominos into a team sport.

Amanda Griffith

Sumo suits?

Lau Rel

If your camp/outdoor centre runs in the winter they make awesome toboggans!

Scott Merrow

Have used them to sound proof walls

Will Shelton

Summer production of the Princess and the PEa.

One of our returning parents asked: "So what are you building new this year?" So, please tell us Summer Camp Professionals - what are you building new this year?

Pauly Hart

hope

Camp Karen

new ideas, new campers, new staff.....new experiences!! and building a gaga pit!

Elaine D'Erasmus Burnett

The culture and community of our organization.

Mike Smith

A new ropes element, quality programming, a community, friendship and fresh ideas!

Nathan J Welton

We built a 9 square court and a new dock on the pond.

Jessica Maxwell

Friendships and memories!!

Kelly Rossebo

New office and new dock! And hopefully, a greenhouse!

Amber Hicks Eck

Butterfly garden :)

Tom Miller

9 square.....interesting

Ryan Reed

New sewage lagoon with a \$200K price tag. About the least sexy way to spend money.

Laura Polis

Climbing wall, with a zip line that goes across camp, New cabins for the high school kids, New cabins for the youngest boys, a new office, and speed bumps.

Michael Landry

Duel Zip Line

Brian Toth

Crate stacking, zip line

Dan Weir

A new building dedicated just to the staff as their lounge

Caterina Kolkman Maw

new friendships & memories at a new camping area.

Patti Sampson

A new health lodge (renovating another building actually)

Robert Lawton

Memories!

Jack Schott

I'd love to see pictures as you finish projects. Always helpful to see what other camps are building and doing! Plus fun to brag about the cool stuff we get to do.

Elise Bates Russell

Renovated bathhouse, a "re-tired horse swing corral" from old tires, hammock hangout. ...

Mike Moose Greenfield

New blob, hammock village, giant Muskoka chair, big theme props

George DeTellis Jr.

Love for you all to share your pictures with us :)

Stephen Maguire

Meaningful relationships... gag :)

Gary Forster

I did the Tire Horse Swings once... HUGE hit. Elsie, can you share your source for the swings?

Elise Bates Russell

Our source: a girl scout for her Gold Award! She is making them. ..

Morgan Tebeau

Bouldering Wall for K-2nd grade

Already tried the search bar... How do you market to rental groups? What kind of places do you post the rental brochure/package?

Ange Atkinson

Following

Nathan J Welton

following

Robert Lawton

Market your camp to former campers who are in the 23-28 year old age range as a place for a wedding/reception/family reunion event.

Joe Richards

google adwords grant

Rosemary Pezzuto

It depends on what community you are in. SOme ideas School District HR departments, outdoor education programs, and leadership programs, Corporate event planners and training departments, Government Contracting offices. Get your camp certified as a meeting site and then put it on the local and regional Chamber of commerce. Hold a day where you provide lunch or breakfast to businesses, schools, ect to have them come, visit the site and see it at its best. \

Bob Terpstra

Following, Hannah Terpstra

Nathan J Welton

Rosemary Pezzuto - How do you get "certified" as a meeting place? I'm in NY.

Adam Benmoise

I created a postcard and purchased mailing lists, yes it's old school but it worked

Nathan J Welton

^^ We've done that and it pays off. We mailed postcards over a year ago and people are still calling on them. Churches particularly will stick them on the fridge and wait for an event.

Rosemary Pezzuto

you go to the places that contract for facilities. you submit a unsolicited proposal that includes your insurance, you health inspections, your state certifications, ect and then many of them will ad you to their acceptable vendors list. Being approved as a vendor makes them able to directly contract with you. This is a good way for school districts, government ect. You should have pictures etc. I have done this at a number of sites and it has been very useful. With a state inspection certificate it makes it very easy.

Nathan Payne

Abby Jones Kristin Gaither

Morgan Tebeau

What type of "rental groups" are you looking for? I am the director of the "shoulder seasons" at my camp. This is all I do - everything from schools, churches, colleges, scouts, businesses etc... but each of these clients require specific marketing and accommodations. Shoot me an email with some more specifics about what you are looking for and what your facility is like. tebeaum@horizonsva.com

RESI CAMPS PRIMARILY SERVING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (IN THE US)

Hi Pros,

I have a few quick questions that will require very short answers regarding working with children with special needs in the resident camp setting. Can I email/FB message you? THANKS, Dave

Tina LaRoche

Email (tina@campholidaytrails.org) or FB message A-OK Dave Hennessey!

Mark Gray

Fb message is fine.

Matt Henry

matt@campskyline.org

Lynn Seeloff

Camp@thefowlercenter.org

"A day at camp is like a week in the rest of the world. A week at camp is like a month."

-SGM

Katherine Parnell

Truth! We say a day at camp is like dog years!

Suzi Schroeder Pierce

A day off from camp feels like you have missed a weeks worth of events!

Ephram Caflun

Ten months away from camp feels like two years.

Hi everyone! I am in the process of training a staff member to take over the role of Camp Director at one of our camps this summer! I am trying to create a cheat sheet for her with items including: required paperwork, evaluations, pick up & drop off procedures, discipline, etc... but I'm feeling like I'm missing topics! What are some important tips that you wouldn't want a new director to be without?? Thanks!

Rosemary Pezzuto

There is a director checklist on Aca and if you look at the standards course materials there are some good thoughts

Rebecca Skerry

Thanks!

Ange Atkinson

Sign them up for gocamppro!!

Todd Churchill

Emergency evacuation procedures. EMS procedures. Difficult parent procedures.

Scottie Roach

Rosemary is right go to ACA to start with - then add from there

Natasha Marie

Your camp's elevator speech and key talking points for parent conversations.

Caterina Kolkman Maw

I totally agree with Todd Churchill. Being I work in the Medical at our camp its very important for the director to know all the different evacs are handled beforehand. Example Life flight, wild fires, earthquakes...

Curt Jackson

Proper Staff Supervision and Recognition

Sandy Laing

Field trip/bus info, who to call with which questions, previous issues the CDs have dealt with... End of summer procedures

Pretty cool

Rosemary Pezzuto

Rosemary Pezzuto Grace Slattery Tara Eileen

Friends, I've gotten confirmation from NBC News that the camp piece I pitched will be airing on NBC nationwide starting first thing Monday morning. It will show up within local newscasts (usually 4:30-7a, an 11a or 12p, then 4-6:30p) on every NBC affiliate across the country all day (tens of millions of viewers).

Traffic will be directed to CampEasy. Please reach out if you haven't claimed your free profile (click "I'm a camp" on cameasy.com, or contact me at [support\(at\)cameasy.com](mailto:support(at)cameasy.com)).

Kristen Parkin

What is the cost for camp easy

Brooke Salkoff

Hi Kristen Parkin - it's free to create / claim your profile and add content, then we have tiers depending on the level of visibility and services you want. You can see the features / pricing here: <https://campintel.campeasy.com>

Northeast camp professionals should be advised.

Morgan Tebeau

Thanks for sharing

Rick Stryker

De nada.

Gary Forster

Actually the most cases are in MN. So watch-out Lake Wobegon!

Rick Stryker

As a 3x Lyme patient, I wouldn't wish this on anyone.

Camp Karen

Load up on deep woods off today!!! 2 were found in CT this week!!!

Anyone have a pet camp or dog camp?

Rosemary Pezzuto

Interesting. Wonder what health dept constraints would be.

Morgan Tebeau

I think it could be a nightmare but at the same time I also think it could be hugely popular and fun.

Let's share some camp problems that only #camppros would understand! Here's mine: the only songs I have on my iTunes right now are the bugle calls we play over the loud speaker at camp (I know, I really need to update my iTunes). Without fail, every time I get in my car and the blue tooth connects to my phone, I am blasted with Reveille. I can't figure out how to get it to not automatically connect to iTunes!! #campproproblems

Jim Owens

I am sorry, but that is FUNNY!

Kim Steward Betts

When we finish eating in a restaurant, I always scrape and stack the plates.

Kim Steward Betts

When buying large quantities of an item at a store, I smile and say "yes, yes, I am" when asked "are you having a party/going camping/doing a lot of crafts/etc"

Deanna Barker

Once we organized a spooky night-time forest walk for teens at Halloween and had to remove all the music off our iPods and replace them with spooky sound files (like the sound of a squeaky swing set slowly swinging, for example). Our iPods all stayed like that for an exceptionally long time. Going on a road trip: "who wants to listen to 30 seconds of a faraway wolf howling on a loop? No? Just us?" Haha!

Sarah Jacobs Resch

This IS hilarious! HAHA Could you get a few more songs on itunes and order them first in your library? Perhaps "Puff the Magic Dragon" would be a better welcome into your car? HAHA

Kelly Rossebo

Anytime I go anywhere in a group, I am counting heads (even with all adults)

Jim Gaffney

I direct a theater camp, I can't tell you how many times I get into my car and get blasted with the tribal chants from The Lion King.

Chris Smith

Anytime I'm in a group, I have a nervous tick if we're not in a circle.

Mike O'Brien

Anytime my wife calls out to me "Hey babe," "Hey Mike," or "Hey honey," my immediate and unbridled response is "HEY WHAT?!"

Shannon Burton

When out in the "real world" and I overhear a stranger say "I can't," I immediately hone in on their situation and start coaching them: Keep going! One more step! Just a little more! YOU CAN!

Grego Dow

I sometimes feel compelled while in a crowded restaurant to call out "stand up for grace".

Grego Dow

If I'm "wanted on the telephone" unless it's David A Borsook "I'm not home"...lol

Amanda Dotson

I speak to every child, everywhere much to the dismay of my "normal" friends. We were just recently out at Bdubs and waiting to be seated. A kiddo was playing the claw machine and was getting frustrated. I crouched down and was helping him guide the claw. After he left, I turned and my friends were either staring at me open mouthed or saying, "Oh Amanda! Not again!!"

Brendan Vaughan

I sing camp songs as I'm shopping,
When I saw what's up to someone and they reply with I'm tired, I reply with I'm Brendan nice to meet you tired, etc lol

The other day at "real world" work my supervisor said he had an announcement and I started in with the camp announcement chant.
I count heads. ALL of my co workers are amazed at my energy and enthusiasm at anything and everything.

Robert Lawton

When my kids were little and not in camp yet, I'd wake them up in the morning singing one of our wakeup songs at the top of my voice - and I do mean TOP. Also, I use the term "singing" rather loosely.

My kids are in middle school now and get up very quietly on their own so as not to wake me up. I have the best (and smartest) kids ever.

Morgan Tebeau

In meetings at work when someone says something I appreciate I'll catch myself giving "snaps."

If you were building your website from scratch what would be some must haves for you?

Robert Lawton

That depends on the budget. Of course you'll want the usual brochure-ware (lots of video). After that, I'd start automating some workflows: registration, medical forms, job applications, online payment/balance information, camp store/care packages. And then it would be neat of parents could log-in and get daily pictures/video/web cameras of their kids in action, alumni directory, staff biographies.

Mike Moose Greenfield

All of the above and I would add a Tuck Shop interface, blog, make sure it's mobile compatible, social media feeds, links to other social sites you use, sharing options so others can share your content, map location, contact, lots of visuals, countdown, donation button and easy to manage without professional help.

Any camps hiring in gta I am an ece in a school board have experience in camp as well.

David Allen-Hughes

I'm sure you're a great guy and, with all due respect, I'm not sure your (fragmented, lack of capitalization) message is marketing you as well as you might hope.

A gift I just got from my camp admin because I always forget to write enough info after I interview staff. This simplifies the process.

Kate Taylor

I have the Like one but I need a dislike one! Awesome

Garran Peterson

Christie Peterson

Michael Constance

Stephen J. Daley Erin Stevenson Lucy Shaw

Erin Stevenson

yes!!!

Michael Landry

Dave Hennessey Jeremy Hickman I think we need mrs j to order a set

Dave Hennessey

Yays Michael Landry

Marc Cooper

I'm considering using it during interviews and will 'rate' their answers after each question.

Cara Dawn Penman

Another thing you can put on your info is 110 and 435. If you make a diagonal line from the top of the 1 to the bottom of the other it will then say NO and 435 is YES. The 4 how must of us print it (not the computer one you see here) is similar to a "y" the 3 is a backwards E and the five is the s. Just some codes we use even on their applications which is about the only thing I will write on their app.

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Haha Hillary Danielle

STS Foundation is seeking Volunteer Host Families to host high school exchange students who will be arriving in August for the 2015-2016 school year.

We ask host families to be at least 25 years of age, be able to offer a loving and nurturing environment, 3 meals a day, and reasonable transportation. The student can share a room with a host sibling of the same gender and close in age or can room alone, but must have their own bed. Students come with travel and health insurance, money for incidentals such as personal items, school clothes and expenses, cell phones, trips, activities, and spending money.

Hosting a high school exchange student is a unique opportunity to share your way of life with an enthusiastic young person from another part of the world.

Every year, students come from all over. By opening up your heart and home and hosting an exchange student, your family can make a positive difference to the life of a young person just waiting to come to the United States.

When you host an exchange student, it is a rewarding experience for the whole family. Family members will obtain a wider international perspective, make lifelong friendships and enjoy the company of an enthusiastic young person. If you have children at home, hosting an exchange student can reinforce their interest in languages, other cultures, and traveling. It can also be fun to have a new sister or brother around.

Families from all walks of life, with or without children, are welcome to apply. Please message me about this amazing opportunity for more information.

What are some activities you've done and some questions that you've asked during group interviews?

Victoria Hoppes

I was in a group interview during college when they gave us a vague way to come dressed (in this case, our school colors/spirit/etc.) and we had to show up with our interpretations of

what they gave us. It was interesting to see what everyone else came in with.

David Allen-Hughes

Ask everyone to come prepared to lead 5 games, and then get volunteers to break people into groups and they can all start leading these games.

You might also let people know in advance that you want them to pretend like they are counselor and everyone else is a camper for when they arrive...encouraging them to be welcoming, friendly, helpful, etc

Michael Garcia Ymca

What interests you about this position? What would your best friend say they liked most about you? What are you passionate about? What did you like most/least about your positions similar to positions you have held in the past? What do you hope to get from an experience of working at Camp? What do you imagine life at camp to be like as a counselor? Tell me about your most valued training? How do you organize yourself for day to day activities? What were some of the more challenging aspects of your most recent (or current) job? How did you handle them? What are your strengths/accomplishments and areas of improvement? Before taking on the responsibilities of this job, what are some areas you feel you need training in? What concerns you the most about working here? How will you know if you are successful? At the end of the interview thank them for coming out. Ask them if they have any questions for you.

David Allen-Hughes

Michael Garcia Ymca - how would you structure asking these during a group interview?

Hey #CampPros, I'm being interviewed tomorrow by WJLA Channel 7, the ABCNews affiliate in Washington, DC about how parents should be able to tell if camps hire legit counselors (no criminal histories, etc.). What are some good indicators, or good questions for parents to ask?

Rosemary Pezzuto

Ask about interview and screening processes. Make sure it is more than a criminal screen.

Find out about pre camp training and what is taught

Ask about risk management policies

As about staff supervision during camp

Victoria Hoppes

I would also ask: From where do your staff come? How do you recruit?

Kelly Rossebo

^good questions Rosemary. I would also ask about staff retention

Rosemary Pezzuto

Also. What procedure are in place for visitors to camp.

Luke Bouma

Ask if they are a accredited ACA camp. Explain the policies of a accredited camp vs a none ACA camp.

Chris Kaake

Camper/Staff ratios!

Laura Fuese Hall

% of returning vs new staff members, how many staff members were former campers

Laura Fuese Hall

Buddy system for counselors and policies to avoid a one staff person alone with one child situation

Jessie Kreider

One question we ask references is would they be comfortable with their kids being in this counselors cabin.

Dominique Jackson

Ben Smoky Radley

Robert Lawton

Every question a parent asks has a right answer. The problem is figuring out whether the right answer is actually what's put into practice. As a result, I wouldn't talk to the camp director, I would talk to two or three of the returning camp counselors - the folks at the bottom of the leadership chain.

Ask them:

- how do you know which kids have severe allergies?
- talk me through your pick-up procedures
- how do you respond to a lost camper incident?
- tell me about your camp's Emergency Response Plan

It doesn't matter if the camp director is a forty year professional with all the right answers. If the folks at the bottom of the leadership chain give you blank looks, it means they aren't trained and aren't prepared.

I also like this method because the parents don't need to know the answers to these questions. They just need to recognize when a counselor is clueless.

Martine Brouillet

We also have a few parents who agreed to be "reference" to our camps. They agree to connect with parents who inquire. Also I agree with asking about how many staff returns from previous years and whether 1 staff is left alone with campers and for how long. Good luck !!

Rosemary Pezzuto

Seven Questions Parents Should Ask when Choosing a Camp

Media Tip from the American Camp Association
April 17, 2009

Seven Questions Parents Should Ask when Choosing a Camp

As summer vacation gets closer, many parents in fact, parents of more than 10 million children make the decision to send their children to summer camp. While some families have already decided on a camp, others are still exploring their options. For these families,

it can be difficult to choose especially when the diversity of camps today reflects the diversity of America. There is truly a camp for every child, every interest, and every budget. The American Camp Association (ACA) recommends that parents ask the following questions to get a better feel for which camp experience best suits their child:

1.What is the camp's philosophy and program emphasis? Each camp has its own method of constructing programs based on its philosophy. Does it complement your family's philosophy? Does the camp focus on learning through competition, or through cooperative learning? How does the camp handle homesickness and other adjustment issues?

2.What is the camp director's background? ACA recommends directors possess a bachelor's degree, have completed in-service training within the past three years, and have at least sixteen weeks of camp administrative experience before assuming the responsibilities of director.

3.What training do counselors receive? At a minimum, camp staff should be trained in safety regulations, emergency procedures and communication, behavior management techniques, child abuse prevention, appropriate staff and camper behavior, and specific procedures for supervision.

4.How are behavioral and disciplinary problems handled? This is where the director's philosophy comes through loud and clear. Do they use positive reinforcement? What are the rules and consequences?

5.How does the camp handle special needs? For a child with special requirements, parents should ask the camp director about needed provisions and facilities. Is there a nurse on staff? A designated place to store insulin or allergy medicine? Are special foods available for campers with restricted diets? Every question is important.

6.What about references? Parents shouldn't be afraid to ask for references. This is generally one of the best ways to check a camp's reputation and service record.

7.Is the camp accredited by the American Camp Association? Why? Why not?

ACA-Accredited camps meet up to 300 health and safety standards. This does not guarantee a risk-free environment, but it's some of the best evidence parents have of a camp's commitment to a safe and nurturing environment for their children.

For more information about a summer camp experience, or to Find A Camp, parents can visit www.CampParents.org. This online resource for families includes expert advice, information on health and safety, and ACA's searchable database of over 2,400 ACA-accredited camps.

Brooke Salkoff

Thanks all! Awesome tips for the interview, thank you

Hannah Hudson

Post a link! Post a link! (Brooke)
:)

Brooke Salkoff

Hannah, yes I'm excited to see it too! Interview went great and CampEasy and all camps will be prominently featured. WJLA is doing the story for May sweeps (the ratings month) so they're doing it far in advance -- almost unheard of in the news business! The good news is that they'll heavily promote it in advance, yay!

I got into camp work by accident but now I am wondering about how you can find residential employment openings

Rosemary Pezzuto

Aca

Dave Hennessey

ymca.net also have camp openings. most of the time, however, they are just listed under "career opportunities"

Hannah Hudson

Updates every two weeks or so. You can get on the email blast.
Also, many year round outdoor education camps that have summer camps need a little extra help around May/June transition time, so ask about that if you have a summer job lined up.

<http://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/jobs/current.htm>

Heather Slimp

There is also the Association for Experiential Education. Provides openings in camps, outdoor education facilities, and other various experiential education fields.
<http://www.aee.org/>

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

This group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/373951909466490/>

It's new, but tons of camps have already posted openings (myself included). Definitely something to keep an eye on!

Angelina Simpson

thank you all for information it has been really helpful

Hi Camp Pros! Does anyone have a good resource or program plan for talking to teens about managing their digital media. I have a CIT training weekend and would love some ideas on how to teach them to use their social media accounts to represent themselves well. Thanks!

Alicia DeHart Theriault

I just saw something about this exact topic...I will search for it and post up the information when I find it.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

I talk about their social media accounts as being part of their own personal "brand." If all people see of you is this ONE post (like a commercial in the Super Bowl) what message are you sending and is it one that you can be proud of.

Dustin Handrich

I've done lots of training with this. Feel free to PM me.

Alicia DeHart Theriault

This isn't what I was initially thinking of, but it relates. I'll keep looking for the original article...
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/r-kay-green/the-social-media-effect-a_b_3721029.html?utm_hp_ref=tw

Mark Young

Hats off to Cory Harrison, he makes all of his staff create linked pages at the start of the summer. We all know a parent is going to check it, so be prepared

David Allen-Hughes

<https://www.common sense media.org/privacy-and-internet-safety/age/teens>

Jennifer H. Selke

I am speaking on this at midstates if you are going.

Love these ladies and all the wisdom they share. #CampCode has lots of tips that you can plug in to your staff training today at <http://camphacker.tv/camp-code>. Just finished recording the second to last episode of season 2.

Jack Schott

BIG TIME!

Beth Allison

I love the fuzzy photo of me - that's how I actually feel this morning!

Gabrielle Raill

Was a great way to kick off the day!

Hey Camp Pros, we are working on doing impact evaluation around camper resilience and hoping to include a staff post session survey. I'm having trouble finding finding measures specific to observation of camper growth for staff. Anyone have something they've used or some good resources? I've been through everything from ACA already.

Camp Fire Georgia is hiring! Doyle Street Pool Lifeguards, Camp Fire Camp WoHeLo Day Camp, Kitchen, Maintenance, Camp Fire Camp Toccoa Counselors, etc. Employment information and details can be found by clicking below. <http://www.camptoccoa.org/employment.html>

Leaders are resourceful this should not be confused with full of resources. Often it is our ingenuity, creativity, tenacity or even our stubbornness that enables us to accomplish what other might perceive to be impossible. Today's Challenge question is from a leader who is not full of resources. from Mark Miller

<http://greatleadersserve.com/development/todays-challenge-low-cost-development/>

Greetings, I'm relatively new to this site but also very excited about the wealth of information. I'm also hopeful you can help me, I'm looking for a creative but serious way to introduce safety procedures to our year round staff. All ideas are welcome

Joel Van Egbert

I've found that if you ask staff to come up with safety policies they usually get them all. One way I use to get the ideas flowing is 360 safety walks. Put them in pairs and have them walk your site. Periodically, when they happen upon an activity area, play location or other well used part of camp - have them stop, do a slow 360 circle & list all potential safety hazards & risks. This generates great discussion & gives them ownership over your covered safety procedures. Enjoy!

Denise Sparky Viau

Joel..THANK You

Chris Kaake

Awesome idea! I think I'll borrow that one myself.

Denise Sparky Viau

Please Keep the ideas coming. Some of our year round staff are not associated with camps but we want them to understand the importance of safety on their role in the big picture

Pauly Hart

safety tip of the week box. people put in their ideas and suggestions. you make a big deal out of giving out a winner once a week.

Rosemary Pezzuto

I once had a camp specialist use the wizard of Oz to go over risk mfmt

Hey folks, (I searched for this topic but couldn't find it)

How do you order medical supplies? Do you use a consulting company or order the same stuff every year? If you have a list of supplies or an effective way of making sure that your camp's medical program is ready to go then please share.

Jessie Kreider

We use Moore Medical for some items (4 corner bandages, bandaids, gauze rolls, BZK wipes, ace wraps, ice packs, sized gloves, cotton tipped applicators, pen lights, etc...) and Walmart/Meijer/CVS for most everyday items that are cheaper there such as most OTC meds and topical meds.

Angela E. Arneal

AMAZON!

Camp Karen

Wal-mart..... and Moore Medical

Garrett Matthew Johnson

We have to order all of our stuff through a company called parachute consulting. But what I really want to know is how do you determine what and how much to buy?

Angela E. Arneal

Inventory of what we have leftover and what we use often.

Denise Sparky Viau

Moore Medical

Robert Lawton

It would be interesting if someone had a spreadsheet that could estimate the number of band aides (etc) used per camper per week.

Hey

I'm really interested in finding out more about other camps as a whole, so was hoping people wouldn't mind posting links up to their websites for me to have a nose at your marketing, offerings, galleries,

itineraries, etc.

It's our first year coming up, and our site is <http://www.teenvgn.com/camp>

Thanks :)

Anna

Jamie Powell

Www.campcheerio.org

Rebecca Skerry

www.CampFireEMA.org

Deanna Barker

www.birchbayranch.com

Anna Charlotte

Thank you!

Amanda Dotson

GSMISTS.org/pathways/camps

Owen Langbart

www.greenwoodtrails.com

Jennie Quinn

<http://www.appelfarmartscamp.org/>

Anna Charlotte

:)

Sean Gundersen

www.campfireiowa.org

Ian Roberts

Www.avid4.com

What does Laura Kriegel mean when she says "No More Arts and Crafts" in the most recent Go Camp Pro blog? It's all about transforming your camp's art program into a dynamic space where authentic creativity comes to life. Check out her detailed take here:

<https://www.gocamp.pro/no-more-arts-and-crafts-moving-from-cookie-cutter-to-endless-possibilities/>

Jack Schott

Big time!

Jason Smith

Awesome post Laura Kriegel!

Natalie Roberts-Day

Beautiful!

Matt Henry

Nice article. We've been moving more and more in this direction. What we've lacked until now is this awesome phrase: "It's coated in extrinsic motivation with a side of defeat"!! Love it :) Maybe a good t-shirt slogan.

Colette Marquardt

We are excited to have Camping Coast to Coast and GoCampPro at Mid States this year! #MidStates2015

Jack Schott

Colette Marquardt Excited to present on some of these exact ideas at #MidStates2015 next week!

Joe Richards

Lexi Morrison and Jessica Tenhor will be working on making this happen at Pearce Williams this summer. Great article.

Jack Schott

Joe Richards Let us know if we can do anything to help!

Beca Franca

Thanks guys! We are moving in this direction this summer and your post is very helpful!!

Jen Dundas

Vicky Wallace

Angela Monn

Tim Wolff

James Davis

Makers everywhere! Arts a madness!

Ontario Camp Pro's - We are looking for a few more first or second year camp counsellors who can attend our three weekend long program to help create amazing camp counsellors for as many camps as possible. Visit the link to get all the information.
<http://www.campisbetter.com/camp-counsellor-institute/>

Does your camp have a travel program?
Do your outdoor trips constantly get rained out?
Well we have the Ultimate Rainy Day Trip Option for you...

Camper Glow & Camper Quest Events hosted at our brand new, state-of-the-art event space Game Changer World located on Rt. 9 in Howell New Jersey.

Camper Glow is an elite, all-inclusive Neon-Glow Dance party that throws the most exciting dance event your camp will ever experience. Camper Quest is the Ultimate All-in-One Game Show Experience that mashes up all your favorite television game shows into one to provide Campers of All Ages with countless hours of fun.

Game Changer World is an innovative, multi purpose space that holds up to 800 people and can host Camper Glow, Camper Quest, Laser Tag, or any other type of events that you desire. The space offers

a full-service snack bar where campers can buy any snacks or refreshments, a meal package can be made to accommodate all of your campers, or you can even bring in your own food. The World also has an Arcade room including 25+ Xbox gaming stations and a variety of classic arcade games available for your campers as well!

For more information, answers to any questions or to book a possible camp event contact us at 732-446-1329. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

What really cool things are you selling in your canteens/camp stores? We are underwhelmed by everything and need some fresh, new ideas!

Jamie Powell

Crazy Creek chairs are one of our best sellers. We can barely keep them in stock!

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

Have a look at these. Great colors , super Absorbant , quick dry , antibacterial. A great idea for your camp store on line or in camp. They will pay for themselves in no time. And we can customize them. Great wholesale rates. MSRP on line
[Www.talitowels.com](http://www.talitowels.com).

Toni Davison Levenberg

Jamie, how much do you sell those for??

Jamie Powell

I think \$50, but I'll have to double check. We get several colors each year with our logo on the back and our campers go crazy for them.

Jamie Powell

This our gym on a typical night during evening program. About 200 crazy creeks left behind just waiting for their owners to come back at the end of the game.

Jason Smith

mudlove.com

Jason Smith

<http://www.itoproducts.com/>

Jason Smith

<http://www.outfityourlogo.com/detail.php?p=CSKC&s;=-1C=-1>

Jason Smith

Rubix Cubes have been popular as well, though I don't have a link.

Emir Butler

Jamie do you order direct or use another vendor?

Curt Jackson

There was a conversation on here a few months ago about making and selling buttons (and lanyards) in the camp store and how the kids and staff would trade them, like Disney pins. They are cheap to make and have good profit margins. There was a lot more detail. you can use the Search bar at the top to find that post and conversation.

Aimee Berger

its A 54521 thing powered by #IACT hoodies - you know what em

Jamie Powell

We buy direct from crazy creek. If you'd like I can get you contact info for our rep.

Emir Butler

That would be great Jamie Powell

There was an article late last summer in the Wall Street Journal touting the benefits of going to and working at camp. Anyone have a link?

Laura Polis

are you sure it wasn't NYT? I have some articles here:
<https://www.pinterest.com/campchampions/blogs-about-camp/>

Hello there,

I am looking for guidance on where to find clearly articulated outcomes that are a result of a child's positive experience in an overnight camp setting. Example key words below.

- Resiliency
- Leadership
- Nature Deficit
- Team Work
- Confidence
- Etc.

Links to your favorite articles and websites are all appreciated.

This is a request from our board for future fundraising efforts. I am happily obliging.

Thank you,

RKY Camp

Chlo Melanon Beausjour

<http://ccamping.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/CSCR-Report-reduced.pdf>

D'Arcy Munn

Thank you Chloe.

Rosemary Pezzuto

Aca ypq

Harold Gordon

Hi: You may want to spend a little time on the Research section of ACAthe website. There has been a lot of work done in this area over the last several years. Here's a starting point:
<http://www.acacamps.org/research/youth-outcomes-battery>

Daniel Arthur

KidActive had great academics on natural spaces.

Hello Camp Pros! I am writing a paper on why you should send kids to camp and I was wondering if anyone has statistics on accidents and safety at camp?

Joe DeBiso

You might want to check with your local health department. I know here in NY the health departments have statistics like that.

Adam Delezenne

Also, ACA, that might be part of their annual reporting

Elisabeth Buckley

Look up ACA Healthy Camp Study.

Sam Grainger

Thank you Elisabeth! That worked perfectly.

Hi all! I'm having a hard time finding an assistant camp director for the day camp I run in the Cincinnati, OH area. Does anyone have any leads?

Elisabeth Buckley

If you provide housing inbox message. But when trying to reach locals post through local college career services, directly contact program chairs of relevant majors to camp- Education, Parks & Recreation, Psychology, Sociology etc. Relevant clubs such as Circle K International, other community service clubs. Even craigslist.com, make sure your councils HR postings can be found via indeed.com.

Hey Camp Pros,

We're a camp in Ontario looking to buy PFD's that are Transport Canada, or CCG approved, in bulk. Does anyone have any suggestions for retailers?

Thanks!

Amanda Grassick

Try Lifesaving Society Store or Aquam Aquatic Specialist, Jack Watson Sports. OCA Members should get preferred pricing. I've purchased from both Aquam and LSS before and the pdfs were good quality.

Hi, Does anyone have any great counsellors from the UK that cannot return to the US this summer? We have places available for counsellors in our t Andrews, Scotland campus and a place for two 25 years plus head counsellors - if you have had anyone who has worked with you who you think may be good please ask them to email me jenmunro@issos.com - appreciate any help.

Does anyone use Headwall harnesses? Like? Dislike?

Jessie Kreider

I use both Robertson and Headwall seat harnesses for our climbing tower so I will give you the pros and cons of each as I see them. Both are great harnesses to use overall and are

safe so my pros and cons are more ease of use, cosmetic and length of life. Headwall
PROS: Webbing keeps it shape well, good pic of how to back up on harness, red tape on buckle so a quick look tells you if they are backed up or not. CON: Can take a little longer to adjust and teach kids how to put them together if all belts are pulled out of buckles. Leg loop webbing is fixed, so while the waist loop may fit well on a child, the small harnesses are still inches too big for their legs (This reason is why I continue to also buy RObertson). Robertson harnesses: PRO: buckles are backed up and need no additional back up. Webbing on leg loops and waist loops can be tightened down as far as you need to go. CON: Showed wear sooner than expected and had issues with the webbing creasing. Hope this helps.

Neves Benton

The new headwall harness has a fast back system if you prefer not to have to do each buckle. I am old school in that I like to have to do all the buckles. I have had fast back buckles look and feel snug only to not actually be connected properly. Headwalls stand the test of time better than any other Harness I have ever ordered.

Lynn Seeloff

On all the pics I see it looks like the leg loops are connected to each other in the back? Are they? I like that the manufacturer will stand behind them for 10 years vs 5.

Neves Benton

Its basically all one piece, no messing with elastic bands in the back that break, get lost, or are just a general bother.

Thought you all might like this.

We have found it really hard to teach customer service to counselors especially when it comes to opening and closing day and "helicopter" parents or the increasing demand for photos etc. Does anyone have a good training to develop empathy for parents and families in seasonal staff?

Kevin O'Sullivan

We bring in parents of campers to teach a class. They go over what they expect from a counselor when they drop off their most treasured child. Most important is we use parents that have had both good and bad camp experiences.

Jack Harvey

Definitely something we struggle with. I've invited former/current camper parents to talk during training and talk about what it means to give someone else responsibility of your most prized possession and also what they expect from a camp counselor.

Natalie Roberts-Day

We have yet to fully implement this, but I think having a panel of parents who come out and meet the staff, then share their concerns, answer questions from the staff, and get a chance to ask the staff questions. The ideal makeup of that panel for me would be a mix of staff alumni parents, new to camp parents, the parents of current staff who were campers, and veteran parents.

Catherine Gorecki

Look into the "Disney" method. In short, when you're not in bed, you're "on stage." You play the part, no matter if you are tired, bored, irritated, etc- you give an outstanding experience. It really helps staff go above and beyond, and understand another perspective.

Another method to look into is +1 customer service. It entails going 1 step beyond what they ask for. This helps incorporate amazing follow-through procedures and staff accountability. The follow-through helps with empathy by helping staff reach to be more accommodating. I'd be happy to share any information I have if you are interested.

Dave DeLuca

Love the topic!

Jack Harvey

It may be a bit more risk management but the who will care when I'm not there video usually makes my staff realize the serious nature of what they've gotten themselves into.

Jason Smith

I haven't done this, but I envision an activity done on the first day of staff training. Partner staff up with someone they don't know. Then tell them to picture whatever object is most important to them in life. Could be their car, laptop, guitar, whatever. The thing they are "possessive" of. Then tell them you are going to ask them to give this object to this new person they just met. If that was the case what would they want to know about this other person? Have them discuss as pairs what they would want to know (and also the answers cause hey it is the first day and you might as well have some get to know you stuff). After that is over ask them to picture the person that means most to them in life (VIP). Tell them that this stranger is going to be put in charge of this VIP, that their VIP won't be able to do anything without this strangers approval. Can't watch tv, can't go to the bathroom, can't eat, unless the stranger agrees to it. What do you want to know about the stranger now? What changed? Why? Link it up to parents sending their kids to camp, and then have discussion based on what you talked about with your partner how do we show parents that we are ready for this responsibility?

Cindy Ann Lee

This is a great topic - add in the parents who complain that the staff isn't greeting them/etc and the staff the indicates the parents won't engage with them. I have watches staff greet parents, etc and had the parent flat out ignore them, I still want them to reach out and do the greeting, contact, etc.....

Karen Carlson

I did a workshop at ACA. You might be able to see it on their website . I call it intrusive parenting

Jeb Lapeyrolerie

I have brought parents in during our training to speak to the counselors. They are carefully handpicked and have made a huge impact by talking about their fears, expectations etc.

Angela E. Arneal

Each parent wants a complete run down of what their camper did that week. We do a weekly newsletter to touch on the basics of each session. I have issues with parents who want to know every hug bite their camper received. It's finding the happy medium between greeting them and giving back their kid and explaining to them every minute of each day.

Jennifer Wesling

We've done a huge push in customer service over the past year. We have 1000 seasonal staff that are all trained using the video below. We have a team of staff out asking questions and we have a lot of staff wearing, "Ask Me" badges.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyJ50kcCTUo&feature;=youtu.be>

Eric Naftulin

Here's an article on customer service I wrote for ACA's Camping Magazine about 200 years ago! Maybe it will help...<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Customer+service%3A+one+of+camp%27s+best+marketing+tools.-a018535082>

Samantha Zachrich

Disney does customer service better than anyone else! I took thier training and adapted it to camp. Check out this book
<http://www.amazon.com/Be-Our-Guest-Perfecting-Institute/dp/1423145844>

Joe Richards

We have really focused on making arrival and departure the highlight of our camper parents week. We have to, it is the only time that they see us. Many parents have marvelled at how welcoming we are with at least three staff members interacting with them before they get to our sign in line. We want them to get the feeling that Pearce Williams is a safe and organized place to leave their children. We want them to trust us. Myself and our summer camp director greet each car as it arrives, give them direction, try to call the camper by name as they get out of the car if they are a returning camper. We train our staff with parents of campers during training week. We also have our family camp at the beginning of the summer which helps staff get more comfortable talking to parents. For UA this is now the normal and our campers parents and campers look forward to the greeting and care we give on arrival and departure days.

Tim Rock

Check out the Fish Philosophy video about Pikes Place and the 4 principles of fish. Use it every year.

Mandy Whaler

We have used the Fish philosophy also and love it. We have also used - Give em a pickle.
<http://www.giveemthepickle.com/>

Evan Heltay

We (ExpertOnlineTraining.com) offer several professional modules covering this topic including Advanced Skills for Working with Difficult Parents, Using Empathy and Diplomacy to Create Partnerships: Part I and Part II by Chris Thurber. Here is a quick summary: Children aren't our only camp clients. Directors and experienced staff know that partnerships with parents are an indispensable component of a successful season. In this entertaining, two-part module, you'll witness five categories of difficult parents along with realistic and clever ways to respond all without compromising your campers' best interests. Part I: Overwhelmed Parents and Anxious Parents and Part II: Bossy, Defiant, and Unhappy Parents. We also have a series of videos that address this topic with a focus on day camps. If anyone would like to view the modules (videos, quizzes, and handouts) please PM me and I'll be happy to give you temporary access.
http://www.expertonlinetraining.com/camp-staff-training-videos.html?library_id=5

Jennifer H. Selke

Mandy Whaler - I am a certified trainer with Charthouse and the Fish! Program if you ever need resources. We have been using it at camp for over 10 years and I have been training schools in the Fish for Schools program for about 8 years.

Jennifer Lee

We also use FISH, and our counselors love it! When we ask about training topics to keep, that made an impact, best part of training...it's always FISH. So many of them talk about the impact it has made in their lives outside of camp. Now that we have been using it for a few years, we have returners lead the presentation. We also weave FISH in throughout the summer.

Matthew Clay Janeway

I echo all comments about Fish. I love the fish philosophy, its so easy and straight to the point.

Hannah Terpstra

Bob Terpstra check it out

Does anyone use CampBackgroundChecks.com to do their staff background checks? Is it easy to use? Are you happy with it?

Hi All - I am looking for a new mass texting service for my Day Camp. Our last one was too difficult to set up each week for new sessions. I have read tons of reviews but would love to have a recommendation from someone who uses a mass texting program.

Amanda Griffith

Here here! Keep me posted!

Richard Simpson

Look into remind 101 (I googled it and it's the first one that comes up) it's designed for teachers to communicate information to students. I'm not sure if there is a way to add people or if they have to sign up - we are using it as an optional way to get additional information to anyone who cares to register - it's our first year. So far I like the functionality and ease of creating sessions (they call them classes) - not So much a recommendation from a user point of view but the functionality of the app & website is super simple

Jennifer H. Selke

I use Remind, it used to be Remind 101, for our archery camp. The downside is you need to have people sign up. You can't really upload people.

Whitney Ewing Kahn

Rebecca Velasquez We should totally do this this year

Becky Shafer

Remind 101 is great. GroupMe is another great app for this...it is what I use for all of my organizations and camp.

Aaron 'A-ron' Levine

Remind

Jessica Heely Huennekens

I also use remind (for teaching during the school year) and I love it. It's easy to create groups for mass texts and the interface is incredibly simple

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

I use remind as well

Laura Fuese Hall

Started using remind for staff this year, eager to add classes for campers. I plan to share the sign up instructions by email and in our welcome folders as campers arrive.

Laura Fuese Hall

Group me is more of a group text, my staff like using it but it is not ideal for sharing information and announcements

Julia Bates

If you're looking for a very powerful service, check out Mobile Commons. A lot of big organizations use it, it powers a number of mass texting campaigns. Of course - I feel like there's a chance it'd be too big of a budget item for camps.

Darren Greenspoon

If you are using a Mac - we use SMSMac (www.smsmac.com). We have even been able to incorporate it into our database system.

Kelly Vidovich

Remind 101 is awesome! Thanks for the tips everyone!!

Totally excited about this! I'm going to see if our kids in our children's ministry want to make these before the end of the school year to use this summer. We just acquired a TON of egg carton thingys from our Easter breakfast, and we have leftover burnt candles from Christmas Eve that I've been trying to figure out how to use!

Robert Lawton

I make these all the time. Warning, the wax will leak through the paper carton. Dip the ball of lint (I use cotton balls because lint with hair stinks when it burns) into the wax and place it into the carton. If the wax isn't too hot, you can do this with your fingers. Otherwise use chopsticks or pliers or tongs.

Judy Weber Grinder

Thanks for the tips!

Brittany Verlenich

Wax off the tiny little cheese wheels from Babybel are excellent as firestarters too

It's a hot topic right now - especially in group living environments - like camp.... implications of immunization laws and exemptions. Don't miss this terrific webinar TODAY which includes this topic and much more. It's not too late to sign up. <http://www.acacamps.org/webinar/good-bad-and-catchy-camp-professionals-respond-communicable-diseases-measles>

It's not too late. Reach out to the staff you loved from the past few summers:

- if they haven't applied yet, tell them you want them back
- if they have and you hired them, remind them how excited you are to be working with them again

No mass emails. Individual messages only.

Jen Burch

reposted! :)

Rebecca Velasquez

Whitney Ewing Kahn

Whitney Ewing Kahn

Rebecca Velasquez- let's get the book for you know who! :)

Alan Munshower

do y'all save spots on staff for the hopeful late returning applicants?

Evan Heltay

Also, in terms of camp, help your staff enhance their skills and become professionals. Invest in your staff and their growth. If they see that you care and are committed to their growth then they will be inspired to envision a future working with you and your camp. Share resources with them even if some of the material is a bit beyond their position at the moment. Tell your staff, over and over, that they can have a tremendous impact on children's lives through work in youth development whether in camping, working as a teacher, psychologist, etc. Working with youth can be a wonderful and rewarding career path. Camp has great people in our leadership, some of the finest I've ever met, and a meaningful life experience for our staff. Here are 2 videos you can all share "Becoming a Youth Development Professional" and "Youth Inspired".
<http://www.expertonlineetraining.com/sample-videos.html>

Hello CampPros!

I am a rising Senior at Pomona College and veteran counselor at Geneva Glen Camp in Indian Hills, Colorado. I am writing a thesis on Political Education in American Summer Camp, and I've recently received a grant from Pomona that will allow me to visit a number of residential camps this summer in order to get a feel for how other summer camps function. I will be in the New England, the Great Lakes, Colorado/Wyoming, and the entire western coast regions. There are so many great camps to visit, I almost don't know where to start, but does anyone work at a camp (or have a connection at a camp) that would be willing to allow me to visit and ask some questions about the great work everyone is doing?

Feel free to write me on here or write me a personal message. Logistically, I'll be in the New England/Great Lakes region between May 13th-June 4th and Colorado/West Coast between August 17-August 31. I know those are busy pre- and post-camp times for everyone, but know that I'd be more than willing to help out as much as I can in those processes were I to visit.

Thanks for giving this a read and hoping to talk to you all soon,
Ben

Ange Atkinson

You should talk to Jack Schott, James Davis, and Laura Kriegel!!

Ben Brasch

Hi Ange -- I talked to Jack last night. He was extremely helpful and gave me a ton of great camps to consider visiting!

Jen Burch

Say more about "political education"?

Ben Brasch

Can do. I know "political" can be a charged word. I understand it in a very broad sense. I will be writing about how camps understand and teach lessons of mentorship, tradition, community and moral education (especially focusing on how camp teaches those lessons differently than other forms of authority in modern childhood).

Thanks for asking for clarification!

Jack Schott

Excited about what you are doing Ben! Travis Allison Dan Weir were hugely helpful to us as we got started and a big influence on what we ended up doing.

Jack Schott

Cory Harrison Chris Aderhold John Quinlivan Scotty Jackson Are all running great camps in areas you mentioned visiting

Dan Weir

Ben, you are more than welcome to visit!

Scotty Jackson

Ben, we'd love to have you. YMCA Camp Seymour, Gig Harbor, WA

Erica Jameson

You're welcome to visit us in Central California as well. We'd be a great place to see here in California.

Ian Roberts

We are not far off in Bailey, CO. More than welcome anytime.

John Quinlivan

Ben. Your welcome at Camp Stella Maris anytime. We're just south of Rochester in Upstate New York

Gerard Gonzales

Will Shelton would Wanca be interested?

Ben Brasch

Thanks for all the support guys. I will make individual contact with all of you and any others who post!

Gerard Gonzales

You are welcome to visit me in Portland and I'd be happy to share about my programs.

I have a full time OE/Retreats Program Director Position Opening at YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin in Michigan. If you are interested or know someone that might be please pass this along. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. bhinton@grymca.org

Apply at the link Below.

Amanda Griffith

Brian Freund

DOES ANYone know any children co ed summer camps that are still employing international students to work for the summer

Jenny Scott

Inspiration Hills Camp is hiring male counselors!

Caroline Bourke

any female counsellor jobs ??

Jennifer H. Selke

Caroline Elizabeth we (UC Berkeley) hire about 30 J1s from Ireland. The main thing is that you can't use the visa's from CIEE (partnered with USIT) and Intrax (Partnered with Go4less) because they have a clause that says you can't work with children, animals or in adult entertainment. We interview and then do direct placement with Interexchange. We are a day camp but being on campus there is a lot of sublets <http://camps.berkeley.edu>

Jenn Becker Carpenter

[Www.Campaldersgate.Com](http://www.Campaldersgate.Com)

Jack Schott

Jeff Daly is my man for helping internationals make an impact at camps during the summer. He runs a company, 3 Adventures, that connects great camps with great people from all over the world. Ok... Matt Buczek would say he runs it but either way great people. <https://www.3adventures.com>

Bill Joe Averitt

Campcoyote.com is looking for male counselors

Summer Camp Fundraiser! Check us out at www.adironduckrace.com !

What is your favorite leadership lesson, resource or activity for you CIT or junior counselor training program?

Maddie Wilmes

This not be feasible for some camps, but for my leadership training year they sent a group of eight campers with two counselors to Utah for ten days. We slept on the river for four of the days and couldn't shower. Then the other days we spent hiking through all the canyons. We all learned that we needed to put others before ourselves (two of us had asthma and had to take it slow, while we also had sports players who were in really good shape who thought everything was a competition) and it showed how we can't expect to be living the high life all the time.

Mike Moose Greenfield

We do a service day at a local shelter/food bank, a rock climbing/repelling trip, 4 day/3 night canoe trip. I love teaching leadership and teamwork. We also teach leadership though teaching about Biblical leaders. Each SALT staff takes one, researches them and presents to the staff and SALTers

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

Be sure to read Michael Brandwein's book Learning Leadership! Lots of good tips and lesson plans in there!

Social Media Question... How does your camp use Twitter? We have great success with our Facebook and Instagram, but Twitter seems to be lacking. Excited to hear/read your feedback and your ideas!

Bill Joe Averitt

I'm interested in learning about that as well. I was informed that Facebook is now old school and Twitter is the thing for this generation. I haven't gotten in a habit of "tweeting" yet but wonders if I should

Coleman Weibley

I believe Facebook is good for parents, Instagram is good to reach the kids... Not sure if Twitter is not effective, or if I'm just don't doing something right.

Laura Edwards

We run everything through our Twitter @TeenVGN. It's our most effective platform and we use it for poster/picture sharing. Quick, live camp updates along with links to different pages of our website etc. people don't like a lot of words. But we do use Facebook to target parents and our more mature audience.

Hannah Hudson

Facebook is becoming "Mombook".

Blake Sunshine Leiber

Twitter can be huge for a few audiences: staff (especially international), industry experts, press and mom bloggers, etc. I recommend looking at your Twitter insights and seeing who your audience is currently (age, location, interests) and tailoring your content toward them.

Kevin O'Sullivan

All our facebook posts go to our Twitter account. However, we have just started an Instagram account. We are trying to define how/when to use it. But it seems to be getting some good following from the tween - teen crowd. As the season progresses we are excited to see what happens and how we can leverage this with our Media guy this summer using 15 second videos by campers.

Dan Lichtenstein

One note on the facebook posts going to twitter... I don't recommend this. For the extra 20 seconds that it takes to post to twitter, I think its worth the time spent. Facebook posts are different than tweets, and as a professional organization, I just think it looks sloppy when a tweet is cut off because its more than 140 characters. For ease, utilize hootsuite, but make separate posts.

Coleman Weibley

So how are you using your twitter accounts? How are you driving traffic there?

Sarah Anne Facey

Just as Blake Sunshine Leiber just mentioned, we looked at our twitter insights and found that the majority of our followers on twitter are more interested in our non-profit/charitable

tweets then summer camp tweets. We now use Facebook as our connection to Families/Campers, Twitter as a way to promote our charitable work and connect with other industry experts.

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

This time of year twitter is just for fun. When campers are at @campernst though, we post constantly so parents have an extra way of feeling connected. It's fun, too, to tell them what's for dinner, what song cabin 10 had to sing at mail call, the fact that cabin J found a frog at the pond, etc. We also use it when there's rainy/bad weather to say, "Don't worry! We're all under cover and still having fun!" Parents have lots of positive feedback on this one. Feel free to scroll through our posts to get an idea.

Hi all! I know that this sounds crazy because this is usually the easiest position to fill, but we need a soccer coach this summer. Any leads?

Colin Stewart

Use an international from Europe. Seems like all of them love soccer. And many have coached.

What helps your team select for talent and not skill? Skills are trainable. Talent is not. Hire some thinking you are going to train into them a talent and you'll be sorry. Coming from a job as a school psychologist for 15 years assessing intelligence, social skills, and processing helped my staff interviewing skills tremendously. Interviewing 100+ people every year with the same questions helped gather a database of good answers. Btw, if you're coming to Midstates I'll be talking about this and running a StrengthsFinder workshop that you can copy and run with your staff. Bring your Gallup StrengthsFinder results.

<http://www.wired.com/2015/04/hire-like-google/>

Benjamin Esposito

Badyr Aschkar

Travis Allison

You're going to be at Mid-States?!? Yes!

Do any day camps have camp stores? If so, do you mind sharing how you run it? Is it open everyday? Do you have one staff member designated to run it? What do you sell? Thank you for any advice!

Katie Mac

our day campers visited the store after lunch- about 2 hours before pick up time and were able to pick an ice cream novelty (included in tuition) . we had one staff member designated to work the store (we ran a day camp program as well as a residential program) in order to make sure someone was held accountable for stocking and cleaning. we also opened the store fridays during pick up if campers wanted to visit with parents to purchase apparel- just make sure to communicate that ahead of time to campers and parents so that they are prepared- hope this helps!

Curt Jackson

I have always thought that day camps should have camp stores if possible. The last day camp I directed didn't have a place for a camp store but we did sell staff trading cards to

raise money for the end of summer staff party and gifts. Campers brought their \$5 on Friday to get their packs. The camp was small (100 kids and 12-15 staff) so the packs only contained about 18 cards.

<http://summercampprogramdirector.com/summer-camp-trading-cards/>

Rosemary Pezzuto

We use it as a learning and leadership program of middle school and high school teens

Katelyn Wamsted

Rosemary Pezzuto, did the middle & high schoolers take money?

Rosemary Pezzuto

No the run the store

Rosemary Pezzuto

They run the store

Joe Fortin

We have various members of our Leadership Team run the store (Tuck Shop). Typically we open for a period just before lunch and again after dinner. We will also open the store upon request for groups. (We don't have static intake/departure days. Our campers during the summer are ELS students taking part in an Ontario/Quebec tour. Typically they are onsite for three or four days).

Rick Doucette

We have a camp store, run by the Director (me) and a staff member. We sell snacks (novelty ice creams, bottles of water or flavored seltzers, snacks, etc) and camp shirts, camp-logoed promo items occasionally (key chains, frisbees, wristbands, knee socks). We also hand out, at no cost, healthy snacks of fruits and vegetables

Janet Keilen

One Trading post similar to above. Run by on employee. We do soda, candy, ice-cream jack the prices cause they do not "need" any of that crap. We do t-shirts at almost cost, and a variety of other items with the camp logo. A necessities section with shampoo, soap, shaving equipment etc., Books, patches. By far the most purchased item is the SLUSHIE.

Curt Jackson

Janet, you sell soap and shampoo at a day camp store? Why?

Janet Keilen

Not a day camp 7 day 6 night BOY Scout camp

Janet Keilen

And Boys..that is why.a scout is clean.

Curt Jackson

Oh, Katelyn asked about day camp stores in her post. That's where I got confused. Duh, I should have realized you were talking about resident camp. Sorry.

Janet Keilen

Andi should have read more carefully.

Hi everyone! Today we are brainstorming and focusing on "Time Off" and "Breaks" for our Summer Camp staff. Our dilemma is we have one week sessions Sun-Sat with our programs running Mon-Fri during the day. We are trying to figure out how to our 20 staff members can all have the breaks they need but still meet the needs of our program. Does anyone have a solution?

Kelly Vidovich

Following and along with that I run a day camp. do any others that have day camps give their counselors a break throughout the day?

Lauren Elizabeth

We run a resident and day camp program and our staff get two hour breaks in the evening. At night there are 3 counselors in a cabin (2 res and 1 day) and they rotate themselves out for breaks so there are always at least 2 counselors with the cabin.

Ben Smoky Radley

For us it came down to staffing. In order to get people the time off we wanted them to have, without shorting the needs of the program, it required us to hire more staff. Not an easy or cheap answer, but one that worked for us.

Brendan Vaughan

Susan, maybe you can shed light on how we did breaks

Colin Penman

Cara Dawn Penman

Erica Jameson

Our time off includes a 1 hour "rest" after lunch, 2 hours after "lights out for kids (in both of these times there are staff on duty in sleeping quarters, so not all are off). Days off are scheduled for 25 hours, starting at 1:30pm (start of rest) and go to the following day (when rest ends). We do them Sun-Tues, and Thurs-Sat. We have one period of the summer where everyone gets 1 1/2 days off for rejuvenation purposes.

Matthew Clay Janeway

My camp is a BSA camp, we run noon sunday thru ten am (approx) saturday. Staff have a free hours from one to two pm every day(with lunch at noon, so essentially two hours) and a night off through out the week depending on their area assignment. They have at least 24 hours off from saturday to sunday depending on how quick we get camp cleaned up and prepared for the next session.

Logan Wicketts

How we do it at my camp is, its broken into jc and counselor. If you just have counselors I would split them in half. We have it where all staff works welcoming day and the day before campers leave so they get to bond with the counselors. The rest of the day's the first 10 would have rest hour off and a staff meeting later in the day. The other 10 would have the whole night off and that switches every day. When campers leave Saturday JC's and counselors have to set up for next session and when they are finished they are off the rest of Saturday. Inbox me if you have any questions :)!

Pearl Verbon

We run resident camp from 2pm sunday to 10 am saturday. Staff get 24 hours off from noon saturday to noon sunday. during the week, we run day camp from 7:30-5:30 each

day, and day camp staff have time off from 7-9pm (with light responsibilities in a resident camp unit that keep them busy for the rest of the evening). Resident camp staff each get two hours off each day. each unit has a unit coordinator that covers the time off for the counselor, so if a unit has 3 counselors and a unit coordinator (UC), the UC would take one t.o. from 10-12, one from 1-3, and one from 3-5. The UC has time off from 7-9pm. we occasionally will have a UC double up groups if they are supervising more counselors, and in that case we usually try to have a CIT with that group as well. the UC also coordinates all the unit schedules and evaluates their counselors. they are the supervisor for those staff.

Katie Jamrozy

Following

Stephanie Ruby Compton

Travis...

Curt Jackson

I'm confused. If your program is M-F why are they working Sun-Sat? When I worked resident camp it was a 6 day program (Mon-Sat) and the counselors got Saturday at 2pm-Monday at 7am off. The unit leaders stayed a bit longer on Saturday, but the program staff was able to get most everything ready for the following week on their down time since they did not have kids to watch.

Chris Kaake

Resident camp Sunday to Friday evening. Everyone gets Saturday off (unless we have a retreat group, in which case we ask for volunteers). Ideally everyone gets a 45 minute break every day--if not, it's a slightly longer break every other day. I plan them around all-camp activities so the highest number of staff possible are in one place. So maybe 3 people will take their break during rest time, 3 during all camp rec in the morning, 3 during all camp rec in the afternoon, and one person each during swim/craft times. Break times change every day so that no one always misses rec or lake time or what have you. It's not the simplest solution, but we have a small staff, where our counselors are also our lifeguards, crafts leaders, archery instructors, etc.

Becky Cavender

We are able to fit in 2 hours breaks during each full day of camp, 10-12, 1-3, 3-5 and 7-9. We hire a bit more staff than needed for ratio so we have enough coverage. More staff=less burnout=better camp experience=return camper

Christine Radford-Long

We go from Sun - Friday evening. After cleanup they all go home and then have Sat & Sun AM to themselves. During the week we schedule that each staff person gets at least 1 - 1.5 hrs off each day so they can shower, prepared for cabin devotions & distress. We just make it work.... and all the children are safe!

Susana M. Lorange

Thank you everyone for all the feedback. :)

Lyndsey McCall

Along that same line, has anyone changed their wake-up/bedtime hours to give more rest? What times have worked best?

Christine Radford-Long

We have our staff meeting at 7:10 in the AM and the kiddos get up at 7:45 ish! Even the 10 minutes extra, instead of 7:00 helps the staff. Our people have to be in their space by 11:00, lights out by 12:00. The campers are in bed according to age. Little ones 7 - 9 are in bed by 9:00 and older ones 10 - 12 10:00. Teen camp we let them stay up later and sleep in. Actually its the same amount of sleep hours we just make breakfast later and they stay up until 11:30 and lights out at 12:00. They think theyre doing something different!

Christine J. Long
Executive Director
Camp Peniel
www.camppeniel.ca
p. (902)649-2471
f. (902)649-2347

For you alone are great and do marvellous deeds; You alone are God. Psalm 86:10

Kayla Ryan

Jessica Weissbuch This could help you :)

Alicia Bentley

We ran Sun-Sat as well. On Sunday we started at 11:00 with a staff meeting and lunch before check-in. Monday-Thursday staff would have a night off. This was from the time the flag was lowered until 11:00PM. During rest hour, co-counselors alternated times off. The night off staff was allowed off site, during rest hour they had to stay on site. Saturdays everyone had off after checkout and cleanup was done, unless they were working stayover, which everyone was required to do one during the summer. On Friday, everyone worked the whole day since it was the last day of camp and was normally busy with getting kids packed up and doing bigger events.

Oakville Area Camp (just outside of Toronto, Canada) : Appleby Camps looking for Mandarin Speaking Summer camp instructors/translators. If you know anyone who might be interested, please check out the link below! Thank you! Please share if you might know anyone who might be qualified!

It's a busy time of year, but...

Participating in this ACA Emerging Issues survey can only help us all get better!

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015ACAEmergingIssuesSurvey?_cldee=dHJhdmIzQHdhbGtpbmdtYXZlcmIjay5jb20%3d&utm;_source=ClickDimensions&utm;_medium=email&utm;_campaign=National %20-%20ACA%20](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015ACAEmergingIssuesSurvey?_cldee=dHJhdmIzQHdhbGtpbmdtYXZlcmIjay5jb20%3d&utm;_source=ClickDimensions&utm;_medium=email&utm;_campaign=National%20-%20ACA%20)

Let us know in the comments when you've finished - I'd love to know how long it takes!

Does anyone have a summer volunteer contract or agreement they'd be willing to share with me? Also looking for examples of volunteer specific training manuals. Thanks!

Kayla Ryan

I would love to see some as well. We have a 2 day staff training and an all volunteer staff.

Andrea J Steffens

Ditto

Mike Moose Greenfield

I use the same forms, application and training for volunteers as I do for summer staff

Robert Lawton

I'm a volunteer, and all my materials are the same as everyone else's.

Does anyone have a written policy expressly forbidding pornography and other adult materials? We had a complicated incident at our leadership camp last summer that involved a participant showing other participants pornography, and we would like to update our policies. Thanks :)

Lori Rosene

Are the participants "campers"? If so, just general conduct and behavior codes should be sufficient to remove the participant from the program. Poor judgement and decision making is something to be addressed in any leadership program.

Carly Robinson

Dang.....

Kevin O'Sullivan

This would fall under our sexual harassment conduct policy. It qualifies as a sexually explicit photograph.

This would result in termination.

Cindy Ann Lee

Ditto Kevin's comment above for us.

Kristine Balles

We have the S.A.D. rule, no Sex, Alcohol, Drugs...

Shawn Madden

In addition to our sexual harassment policy, if this involves minors, it falls under child protection policies

Angela E. Arneal

That's sexual harassment; which is a policy of all places of employment.

Jeff Cox

Emily, you said participate correct? If so I don't think it falls under employee policies. If you already have a set of policies in place for participants. You could simply add copy indicating that it is prohibited. Unless it is already covered as Lori indicated. Of course, making the policy won't necessarily deter the action.

Emily Galbraith

Those involved were all minors and campers, and although we have general rules, we are looking at expressly forbidding it, like we prohibit drugs, alcohol, tobacco products etc.

Does anyone have a referral agent contact in Venezuela? I am not renewing my contract with the current agent. (even with the issues in VZ there are still many campers coming to North America for the summer). Please message me if you have a contact. I'm also looking for a contact in Colombia. Thank you.

Who uses online training tool for camp counselors? I'm eyeing expertonlinetraining.com and it's looking like a great resource!

Suzi Schroeder Pierce

We use it for our first year counselors and love it!

Mark Shivers

Highly Recommended!

Ruggs Cote

We use it as well, very comprehensive library of videos!

Katie Adrian

It's a great compliment to our start up trainings! Gives a good intro so we can dive deeper in person.

Dan Lichtenstein

We also utilize Expert Online Training. Its actually part of our hiring process. We ask new staff to complete two modules within two weeks or so of them returning their contract. If they can't live up to that, its a sign that we may have some further concerns.

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

We have to use redwoods trainings online as that is our insurance agency- all other trainings happen in person.

A few folks were asking about our stick figure evals. Here's an example of our junior high camper evaluation of staff. Feel free to ask questions. I got the idea from Hillary Freeman who's also part of this group so we can both chime in.

Does anyone have their campers "evaluate" or provide written feedback for their counselor. If so, how is it organized? How is the feedback provided to the counselors? Does staff appreciate it or loath it?

Jack Harvey

We do a fun eval that has a stick person in a camp shirt with their picture as the head and ask: what did you learn from me?, what is something I always say?, what 3 words describe me?, what animal would I be? and why and anything else you want to tell me? separate envelopes were designated for each counselor so the campers would put the evals in the envelope. Supervisors would always read through them first just look for trends and anything inappropriate and then they were given to the counselor to be read in private after the kids had left (although the kids name wasn't on the eval). I think the staff enjoyed the feedback. We coached them on not taking every single thing campers said to heart but to look for overall trends. If a good number of kids describe you as mean or boring, you may need to do some self evaluation of why you come off that way. Plus when staff would hit that mid summer slump they could pull out oldevals that would cheer them up and encourage them. i've even heard of staff saving them from year to year and looking over them when they've had bad weeks at school.

Tom Cramer

Thanks guys!

Bethany Ringdal

The stick figure-eval is a great idea! Maybe I could do a generic stick figure (so I only have one to print) and let campers fill in the facial expression and draw anything else on that they want to. My staff were ASKING for individual evals last year... I'm just worried that we don't have time for it.

Alicia DeHart Theriault

We use the stick figure eval for this. Campers complete one for each of their bunk counselors at the mid-way point of the session. Campers complete them during Rest Hour and hand them in. The director team reviews them immediately. Once they are reviewed they are made available for the staff to review. We emphasize that it's a huge opportunity for growth and improvement, an opportunity to right any wrongs, and a huge opportunity to connect with kids whom they may not have a connection with. While getting constructive feedback can be difficult, it's been overwhelmingly positive for us and our staff. We get a glimpse of how each staff member is doing at the halfway point of the session so we can address any concerns- and hopefully remedy them- before the campers go home. And our staff get first-hand information about how they're doing in the bunk, which either reinforces the great things they are doing, or gives them a huge opportunity for personal growth. (We are a 3 1/2 week session, residential program. Evals are completed at the midway point of both sessions.)

Curt Jackson

Jack, would you mind if I write a post on my blog about the way you do your stick person evaluations? I think it's a great idea. Do the kids write their answers on the lines of the stick figure or do you have separate lines for answers?

Jack Harvey

go for it. I think there are extra lines just for more room. I can send you a copy if you'd like.

Curt Jackson

That would be great. Thanks, Jack
curt@recreationpros.com

Charon Cricket Snearing

JAck..I'd like a copy, too...cricket@srdaycamps.com

Colin Stewart

Likewise. Sweet idea. Cstewart@ccalbany.org

Curt Jackson

Jack, maybe you should just post it in the Files section of this FB page. The link can be found right underneath the header at the top of the page, if you didn't already know. Thanks again.

Hillary Freeman

You can also have the kids draw the stick figure as long as you have a large example with the questions written out. That saves on time and printing out separate evals, I made individual ones with counselors pictures to help campers identify them- some of our staff looked alike and may have only been with campers for a couple of days. We also modified the questions a little bit for the middle school and high school campers.

Jack Harvey

FYI-Hillary Freeman is who I got this idea from.

Curt Jackson

Thanks for the clarification, Hillary. I was thinking that if the example that you were going to send is a jpg image, Jack (or Hillary) you could just post it here on this thread as well. That may be the easiest thing to do.

Jack Harvey

I'll post it when I'm at work tomorrow.

Scott Rothschild

jack - can you share a copy w me? Scott@kencamp.com
Thanks

ACA Raise the Bar is an initiative launched by the American Camp Association to help camps measure outcomes. The mission of Raise the Bar is to use measured outcomes to (1) improve camp, (2) identify best practices, and (3) articulate the value of camp to a broader audience. Next deadline for applications is April 30, 2015. Check it out.

Apologies if this has been posted - but reading an advanced copy of Laura Kriegel's upcoming GCP blog post has me thinking that 3D pens could be a relatively inexpensive way to have the coolest thing ever in your Maker's Space this summer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6r5q9T_7u8A

Jen Dundas

Vicky Wallace

Fundraising question. Has anyone ever used or is currently using a text to give or crowd raising organization to fundraise? If so did you find it worth the time and investment? Any info would be great. Thanks!

Richard Armstrong

Talk to Priscilla. She has some good info on this.

Amelie Nicole

Tim horton childrens foundation uses a "text camp to..." to help raise funds on Camp Day, I think it's 5\$ a text. While I can't attest to how much this particular fundraising system works, Camp Day raises well over 10 million a year so I'm sure it raises a good portion of that.

Kevin O'Sullivan

Would love to hear some responses.

Pam Harris

Hi Eric, Text to give and crowd funding can be great options for attracting new and/or younger donors. They are especially good for specific projects or causes (e.g., "help us raise \$5,000" for a new basketball court), but should be a part of a larger development program.

Scotty Jackson

I'm interested in what you learn. We are trying to find an affordable service, that can tie with a fundraising video. So far they seem very expensive.

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/goatsandsoda/2015/04/06/397879410/go-ahead-little-goat-eat-some-poison-ivy-it-wont-hurt-a-bit>

Dan Kosmo Leaver

As the wise Homer Simpson says, "Leaves of three, let it be. Leaves of four, eat some more."

Becky Vincent

Nerd that I am, I would like to point out that the plant the goat is chomping on in the photo is english ivy, not poison ivy. :-)

Ashley Powell

I would totally love to have a goat at camp. But that is coming from a brunette Ellie Mae Clampet type.

Natalie Roberts-Day

Jason Smith

Jennifer H. Selke

We have heard of goats for fire abatement. The problem is that they can walk their hoofed feet everywhere and eat everything and it is really rough on the ground contributing to erosion.

Jen Dundas

Is it more amazing what the goats can do or that you can order them from Amazon? How will a drone drop them off?

Are there any Austin-based #CampPros in this group? I am hosting a really fun, indoor cycling event this Thursday at 7:45pm that helps send kids to camp this summer! It's only \$25 to register and all the funds raised go straight to the kids. You can learn more here or send me a FB message:
<http://bit.ly/scope-sw>

Tina Bruno

i work with lots of Texas based camps and will gladly forward any flyer you have..email it to me at bruno.tinarose@gmail.com

Ashley Powell

I am looking at getting back to Texas, and my home sweet hill country. Would like to stay connected to learn about job opportunities out Austin way.

Does anyone use a mobile app?
If so, what for?

Thanks!

Travis Allison

Adam Simon and Odyssey Teen Camp have a very simple, but effective marketing app (open this link on your phone camphacker.tv/otc-app). It allows them to change the marketing focus seasonally AND give their kids and families something to show their friends.

[disclosure: OTC is a CampHacker client and I built the app]

Jessy Glair

Thanks

Jessy Glair

So what is the function? photos, contact us, and linking through? Or do they use it for parent info!

Ashley Powell

We use WhenIWork to schedule shifts for staff, 4-H agents, and adult volunteers. They offer nonprofits a 50% discount.

Dick Thomas

Hi Jessy. I also build mobile apps for camps - you can download some older versions here (<http://www.dickthomasassociates.com/your-camp-app.html>) w/mobile browser - we are currently building a newer, sleeker version - feel free to pm me for details.

does anyone have a service dog policy for staffers/volunteers? If so, please email me at [mlanders\[at\]nhcucc.org](mailto:mlanders[at]nhcucc.org)

Thanks!

Just sharing an amazing sunset view from YMCA Camp Cosby.

Marit Rannei Olsen

You take this sunset and be quiet about it! Also, I miss you :)

Andrew Lalley

Michael Landry

Anyone have any luck with getting concrete donated by a company? We are looking to add a small pad for a basketball hoop. Any suggestions as I look for a donation?

Roger Barkman

Stay local is your best bet!

NIGHT SECURITY: We have had it over the years, from too loose to too strict. And I find it's harder to hire for these days. Lets just talk about that position - things you have liked or not and tips on what you've adjusted - thanks!

Does anyone know what make and model stainless steel pot w/ locking lid NOLS uses for backcountry cooking?

I am trying to update our Staff Observation form. We currently use a form that has open-ended questions. I find it difficult to complete observations in a timely manner, while providing detailed information in this format. If I find it difficult to use, I know our summer leadership team members (who have less experience completing evaluations) are likely finding them difficult to use- and likely not providing the best information/feedback.

It would be amazing if there was a form that provided detailed examples (pre-written on the form) of observations made and an area to provide feedback about specifics for each observation as well. This would allow staff to "check off" examples of the observations they made rather than trying to take notes or write out a full description, but at the same time provide them with the space for additional notes or feedback.

I feel like providing the pre-written examples not only makes it easier for the observer/evaluator, it also provides the staff members with specific examples of what's unacceptable, satisfactory, exemplary, etc. Does anyone have anything like this that they'd be willing to share?

David Seddon

<http://www.acacamps.org/accreditation/resources-tools> has some great example forms. ACA Standard + Staff Development = Win! I used the forms as a template and built in our specific camp programs to the statements.

Carly Robinson

5 minute feedbacks and camp staff evals from ACA online! (get a free membership if you're new there!)

Rosemary Pezzuto

Have you looked at the aca ypqa materials

Lauren Elizabeth

Following

Joyce Oberthal

Following

Pip Nightingale

Following

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Following! Hillary, mostly for weekly observations as opposed to our formal mid-summer and end of summer evals.

Joyce Oberthal

I really like the idea of making a list of "look fors" this could really help staff know where they are doing well and specific things they could do to improve

What is the strangest thing you have sold in your camp store or have seen in other camp stores?

Laura Fuese Hall

This is an interesting question. :)

Laura Fuese Hall

Our camp store is only open when parents are at camp, which means campers do not need money. I realize that many camps make a lot of money at their stores but we have opted not to sell to campers and are glad to NOT have to track camper accounts, etc. That being said, we sell tee shirts, sweatshirts, camp blankets (very popular), post cards, custom croc shoe charms (expensive to make so not a big seller) and we are adding CSC stuffed animals this year.

Mary M Siniard

I don't know that we sell anything strange in the camp store...but I have seen many a rock and several crawdads on the camper black market ;)

Chris Kaake

A few years ago two of our counselors decided to start their own small business carving walking sticks and selling them to the camp store. They made exactly two lol, but we did sell one of them!

Bill Waite

100% Made in America Rubber Ducks.....It was what I call a Good Bad Idea.

Bill Waite

However, we do sell our own maple syrup in its own custom jug. Expensive start up costs, but parents love it.

Jess Liotta

Obsidian for knapping, probably.

Laura Fuese Hall

Bill Waite, that is very cool!!!

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Camper black market. HAHAHA I just had water go up my nose from laughing so hard. We sell shirts that say "I kissed a Moose" it all makes sense now, but when I first saw it I thought it strange.

Travis Allison

(it's different but it was a hit!) Pillowcases with "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep With Dreams of Glen Mhor Camp"

Mike Moose Greenfield

Mountain Dew Fuel. It lasted about 2 days before I figured out it wasn't regular Dew. All camp games had a lot of energy for those days

Ephraim Shapiro

ping pong balls.

Justin William Cruse

At the camp I work at we sell bacon mints ranch mints and dill pickle mints they sold like crazy. My camp manager also made a line of seasoning (were in Louisiana) and it sells amazing

Justin William Cruse

Also sell big foot action figures and big foot air freshener

Justin William Cruse

Also dime-in rings...

Curt Jackson

Justin, I think your in the lead with the oddities you sell. Dime-in ring...hilarious.

Tony Deis

Razor sharp obsidian rock and caribou antler billets.

Tony Deis

Motivational camp t-shirts.

Tony Deis

Tony Deis

Don't worry, there's a story behind each one of those. Kids love the t-shirts BTW.

Grego Dow

When I was a counsellor (many moons ago) I painted animal symbols on rocks and turned them into neclaces and sold them at my camp's tuck shop. They actually sold really well. I made them in my free time at camp from rocks at camp.

Mike Moose Greenfield

Justin, what's the story on the dime-in rings and where did you source them?

Justin William Cruse

I don't get them my boss does I'm at the camp today and I'll ask him

Curt Jackson

You could almost offer an entrepreneur program for a small group of campers by having them make and sell things at camp. i didn't realize how many staff make things to be sold.

Curt Jackson

Tony, those antlers are expensive at the pet store. My dog likes them.

And while I'm at it, do any camps use Snapchat? We've established that we won't use it, mainly based on the premiss of what the app was originally created for, but I'm curious if anyone does use it, how they use and what success they gain from it...

Cortney Tyger

Curious about this, too. I lean to your camp's current policy, but have wondered if there are ways to utilize it correctly...

Bill Joe Averitt

Avoid it at all cost!! In parents view, it's the most dangerous app for kids to have access to. Just doesn't look good for camp having an account of its own. Stick with Instagram

Cortney Tyger

Been leaning that way, too, Bill Joe Averitt

Melody Williams

Us also! Don't really want to encourage the app when working with kids

Patti Sampson

There have been some conversations around this already with some great points on either side. Just do a quick search. :)

Tina Bruno

Was at a presentstion the other night and For what it is worth...Snap Chat was highly cautioned again by the FBI agent giving the talk I attendedast week..he works in cyber crimes.....

Coleman Weibley

Thanks... Pretty much sums up what as an office we've already decided and know. If you have an feedback on Twitter, I also posted a question on that!

Full time leadership position available with Avid4 Adventure (www.avid4.com).

REGIONAL MANAGER in Washington DC Metro Area. Do you know someone interested in and capable of opening new adventure summer camps in the DC area?

Job description - www.avid4.com/jobs/positions

Questions - paul@avid4.com

Does anybody have a hazard communication program or PPE training?
or how you do notify your staff about the hazards they may come into contact with at your facility and how to handle those hazards?

Does anyone have any feedback on becoming a member of Trinity Purchasing Services? Sounds too good to be true for an already established camp. Any information would be appreciated. Thanks.

Whitney Winston

If you're talking about Trinity HPSI it is fantastic. A few directors back we became members, but somehow the knowledge of that got lost. I just found out in January that we were members. We switched propane companies to one that is on the list and will save about \$8000 annually.

Melissa Garza

We are getting great savings through food service, gas and program supplies. I felt the same way and thought there had to be a catch. None so far except receiving a monthly email showcasing a vendor.

Lori Rosene

Annual savings on food and propane with no effort on my part minimum of \$2-3K annually. More if you count other venders.

Joe Murphy

They're awesome and super friendly. You have no reason not to join unless you hate saving money, dealing with nice people, and experiencing responsive customer service.

Joe Murphy

for free

Ryan Reed

I agree with everyone else. If you use a contracted food service, you'll see less savings, since they're likely already part of a buying network. It's still worth it for the propane alone. And if you do food service in-house, your savings will be huge!

Matt Henry

Yep.as above.

Drew Hullinger

Thanks to all. Good info.

Ghormley Meadow Christian Camp, located in the beautiful Cascades of Central Washington, is looking to fill a number of summer staff positions, including several leadership staff positions. To find out more, please visit our website at www.ghormleymeadow.org

What would you do with 10-15 old tractor tires. Looking for ideas.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

The bigger ones are a great addition to an obstacle course. If they're smaller, you could also make them part of a Giant's Finger or Tire Swings on a Challenge Course.

Roger Barkman

Raised beds for a garden- plant quick growers like herbs and greens and eat them while at camp. Slower selections like carrots and corn are only done after summer camp is done... Make gardening part of your program

David Kern

With your theme this year, I think a game of some sort is in order...

Gomez Anthony

They could be a great port hole low ropes element

Jen Dundas

Sell them to cross fit start ups and use the money to support your priorities

Catherine Gorecki

Quidditch goals.

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Obstacle course, fitness activities, team building activities, goals for sports, balance activities, etc. You could even break them down and paint them as targets for a shooting sport.

Austin McCord

Planters

Kelly Ariel Yewer

Fitness for sure! We introduced a fitness, healthy living and nutrition program at camp and the kids LOVED it - it was great for them to be able to do lots of physical activity and enjoy it - especially the older kids too as it gives them something that is especially designed for them

Mike Moose Greenfield

Sandbox, challenge obstacles, fitness challenge, planters, post base for volleyball or portable flag pole

Carrie Kishline Lawson

Horse feeders

Dan Bohnker

We had a sandbox that was made with an old tractor tire growing up.

Paul Petersen

Wasn't it Robert Duvall in Apocalypse Now who said: "I love the smell of burning tractor tires in the morning..."

Stephanie Huber Williams

We use them in our youth garden. They are great for planters!!

Grego Dow

Bury them part way into the ground and make a tunnel to crawl through. Like part of an obstacle course.

Thomas Anderson

use them as anchors

Curt Jackson

Tractor Tire Workouts

Molly Modrzynski

Team building!! I have been looking for tires for a challenge I had in mind! Paint them different colors, (5 total) with the biggest on the bottom. (If they are the same size, that is where the colors come in handy). Have 3 large poles in the ground and the team has to move the tires from one pole to the other always keeping the bigger tires on the bottom of the stack. (or the colors have to stay in order). So if the bottom tire is white, then green, black, purple and red, the red tire can never be on the bottom of a stack, and the purple can never be below the white, green, or black and cannot be on top of the red. It doesn't matter which of the other poles they transfer the tires to.

Bubba Mills

Chris Retz

vertical potato garden

Kinark Outdoor Center has some great 2, 4, and 6 month positions for people with NLS, camp experience, and experience with special needs/autism. <http://bit.ly/1C7iX4e>

Hi all! I was wondering if any of you would be willing to fill out some interview questions for me regarding marketing in your organization? This is an assignment for my Masters degree so I only need one response, but would love to have as many as possible to learn from many perspectives! Here is the link to the Google Form where you can easily answer the questions.

<http://goo.gl/forms/u5cPxyStjw>

Thank you all in advance!

Brooke Nicole

Thank you Dave Hennessey for the recommendation of using a Google Form!

If you need a break from all your summer planning, don't forget you can get into a National Park FREE in a couple weekends!

as you begin to update websites, and facebook posts, keep the following in mind. It is always better to use your own pictures

Travis Allison

Great share, Mark! Thank you.

Tony Deis

Mark, thanks for posting this!

Looking for color war breakout ideas, keeping in mind we are a 75 kid day camp with kids aged 3 to 12 and are jewish in case that makes a difference to your suggestion?

This group is AWESOME, but does anyone know of a group like this for those of us who work specifically at camps with religious affiliation? Sometimes the things I'm looking for are specific to that and I think a more specific group to that would be a better place to ask those questions....

Tink Rabey-Hall

Hi Judy! If you are a member of CCCA, you might be able to affiliate with one of their networking sites (they are quite restrictive). If you are brave -- and all true camp people are or are at least willing to try :) to be -- you could put the questions out here. There are many of the 5000+ folks on here that are involved with religiously-affiliated sites and would be happy to dialogue about specifics. Like me for instance!

John Mark Moore

In addition to what Tink said, many of the sections in the Christian camp and conference association (CCCA) have Facebook groups and email groups set up. Most likely you do not have to be a member to be in those. Go to CCCA.org to find out which section you belong in and contact one of their cabinet members. they should be able to let you know what types of social media communication they use in their section and if you have to be a member or not to use them. our section has a Facebook group and an email group.

Kevin O'Sullivan

I've tried to join some CCCA and they don't let you in unless you have a membership with them. I am part of one from when we were members and there is very little activity on it compared to this group!

Whitney Winston

There is one if you work for United Methodist Camping and Retreat Ministry.

Tink Rabey-Hall

I was able to join the fb page for our CCCA section (we are not members at this time), but there is NO activity there. I tried to join a national one and was turned down because I was not a member. You don't need to be a member or work for the UMC to "join" their page -- United Methodist Camp & Retreat Ministry Association -- again little activity. They do have a nice weekly newsletter thing (S'more Mail) and there is a List Serve still in play run by Kevin Witt -- who believes such things still exist (anyone can join). Sometimes those e-mails are worse because people ask the same questions again and again....and there is no way to look up old answers (like here). There are also a few other denominations that have pages, etc., but this is the best activity on fb -- my opinion -- and the broadest scope of perspective and experience. I'll respond to religiously-based questions when I see them :).

Maggie Braun

I would hope that if you pose questions on this forum that might be in your eyes for a religious camp - there might be great feedback from lots of people. I operate a religious camp and I would not hesitate to pose a question to this broad group and feel strongly that those with the appropriate background will respond. The larger the group the more chance we have of great conversations.

Jen Burch

This is a new one started by some folks from ACA TriState last month:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/234682040026147/>

Ettie Cohen

I run a jewish based camp and would be happy to help out anyone with specific questions in that area

Jen Burch

There are a TON of religious camp folks on here (hi, everybody!) so ask away, Judy.

Megan Maiello

Yup agreed! Good to know you all are out there lol

Megan Maiello

Yup agreed! Good to know you all are out there lol

Bethany Ringdal

Judy--what's your camp's denomination? Lutheran Outdoor Ministries has some great resources, if you don't mind hanging out with us Lutherans!

Judy Weber Grinder

Non denonomonational.

Bethany Ringdal

Well the Lutherans welcome you! We also have a yearly conference in November that's very helpful.

Craig Hicks

I'm a Christian camp director for the West FL Dist., Assemblies of God, located in Marianna. I'm new here and loving all the info on here!!

Craig Hicks

Marianna, FL that is.

Mary M Siniard

I'm in the 3CA groups, and this one is way more helpful - no matter what the question! 3CA is nice, but their fb groups are not very active. We are Baptist. If you just put a note on your post about the kind of response you're looking for you can usually get some good insight around here ;)

Ontario folks - Have you heard about the Society of Camp Directors? We've got a great speaker coming next week to The Fourth restaurant in Toronto.

Members please RSVP to Sol Birenbaum.

If you'd like to come as a guest (cost is \$70) please email me: travis@camphacker.tv

BUNK BEDS! Out with the OLD?? Y'all were so very helpful in counseling me that wood was the way to go, so maybe you can help me out again: what can we do/should we do with 50 old army surplus 1950's metal bunks? Ideas, please and thank you!!

Connor Packard

We took the tops off the metal bunks and used them as staff beds and the rest you could probably just take it to a scrap yard and sell?

Kelly Rossebo

Scrap would bring in some cash. I would also check with local shelters to see if they could be of use to them.

Grego Dow

We used some for storage shelves in our maintenance and program sheds.

Lori Rosene

Maybe other camps in the area?

Dan Lichtenstein

I've listed on craigslist. You may find a few people who would be interested. It certainly won't be a large number, but you may make a bit more that way then sell the rest for scrap.

Harrison Gabe

they can be turned into canoe racks pretty easily.

Colin Stewart

I took mine to the scrap metal merchant when I changed to wood.

Trey Archambault

If you have the storage space, I'd keep a few in your emergency shelter (heavy weather ect) and cut down rest to use as repair material. Angle iron can be very useful in a pinch.

David Peterson

We put a sheet of plywood on them and used them for storage shelving in out maintance and sports storage area

Wendel Ritz

Paintball course obstacles

Kara Noble

You can recycle the metal. There are services that will come pick them up.

Chris Retz

find a metal recycling place near by and sell it to them for weight

Charlie Qualls

Talk with your maintenance staff. They can be cut up and depending on the type of metal they can be welded to make things like fire grates.

Misty Dawn Shay-Rivera

We used them for staff beds but left the top on with no mattress as extra storage space for their stuff! :)

Joe Hauser

Our camp ranger used some of the parts for picnic tables. He also recycled a lot and used the money for some new charcoal grills that the staff use Friday nights for steak :)

Janet Keilen

Craig's Llist

Paul Petersen

Carly - where are you located? I may be interested in some of them

Dan Mathews

Our local emergency management agency took some from us!

Carly Robinson

Thanks y'all!!! Great ideas! Paul, we are just outside Athens, GA.

Mark Weller

Local homeless shelter

Bill Waite

craigslist, get some money back on that.

Bill Waite

or turn them into tool racks for your maintenance dept.

We have some Returning Camp Counselors that we interviewed yesterday and are not rehiring them. Do any of you have a sample "decline" letter you send out to past counselors?

Amanda Grassick

I think there was a discussion about this last month. Try searching the discussions.

Carrie Wilson

I send the same letter to everyone, whether they are return or not. There were great samples posted!

Sarah Hartley

Carrie, do you know where? and when the counselors reply back asking why? What do you tell them??

Carrie Wilson

If you search rejection letters in the top right, the conversation will come up with the samples. If they reply back, I just give the standard HR response and basically reiterate what was in the letter. It feels awful because I really want to tell them why - but typically, they've heard "it" throughout the past summer, they've heard "it" at the end of the season review, so really, they should know why at this point! (right?) That is what I've been told to do by my HR people - so I do:) And it makes sense.

Natalie Kemp

Just did a quick search and found this thread:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/camppros/search/?query=dreaded%20task>
You might find other threads using the search tool at the top right of the page (above the "about" section). Hope it helps!

Grego Dow

Idea for the future; try to ensure these staff know they will not be returning when you send them off at the end of the summer. If you make this clear, you won't have to waste your time interviewing now people whom you already knew you were not going to offer a job to.

Sarah Hartley

aww thanks guys!!! haha I had no clue about the search option! That really helps. I appreciate all the advice! it's super hard but gotta be done. :-)

Charon Cricket Snearing

I agree with Grego. Those staff should have a good idea at the end of the summer through their performance assessment that they may not be asked back. Really shouldn't be a surprise if it was performance related. We send letters in the Fall inviting staff to return or not asking them back. Occasionally, I get a couple staff who want to talk about why and sometimes we then have them back. Maybe last year's placement wasn't a fit, with the wrong age level, wrong supervisor, etc. Rarely have we given people a second chance and it didn't work out.

Joe Richards

Depending on how much you liked them I have posted an email I sent to some who we did not have back. <http://www.yoyojoe.com/archives/moving-on-from-camp-attempting-an-explanation-1022.html>

Nathan Charles

Joe Richards - I feel like that is just too much. I think we overdo it and simply if you do not want to hire someone back just send them a message via what ever mode you use stating such. Example: " Dear person ABC, Thank you for your interest in continued employment with Camp XYZ. Unfortunately we are not able to offer you a position on this years staff. We wish you the best in all your future endeavors. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at XXX-XXX-XXXX. Regards, ...".

Then if they make contact you can explain or give the company line as per your HR or your personal feelings. The extra nice feelings can often leave a staff member going "what the heck" is this mixed message about.

Sarah Hartley

We are a very very small camp and do everything :-> so myself and another are sorta the "HR" personal and director and register :->

Dave Hennessey

Hillary

Joe Richards

Nathan Charles it is really meant for special staff that have reached the end of their time at camp without knowing it.

Nathan Charles

I see, thought that was for everyone with exception for the real dirtbags.

Curt Jackson

Hopefully, all of us are intuitive enough, not to hire "real dirtbags".

I do agree with Nathan, though, that if I got that letter, Joe, I would feel like I was receiving mixed messages. I'd be thinking, "If I am so great and will be missed, why wouldn't you want me back." It's very unspecific as to why you think I am no longer "good enough" for camp or why you think I should "move on".

Bottom line is that it is never easy to deny someone a position at camp. I agree with the others that, if this is a person who is not worthy of returning it should be pretty clear through evaluations of the previous summer as to why. If the evals are glowing because the supervisor didn't have the heart to be forthright and clear about their performance at the end of the summer, then things are going to get a little messy now that they want to return.

David Allen-Hughes

Returning counsellors not getting hired? They gave you a summer - give them a call instead of a form letter.

Kevin Browne

I agree with David. Sometimes you need to tell them why.

Scottie Roach

Just because they were great staff members in 2014 doesn't mean they are in the right place to return for 2015. Sometimes there are things you find out after camp or such that will influence your decision making. It will hurt their feelings and it is a hard conversation to have.

Bill Waite

I call them and just say we do not have an opportunity for them at camp this summer. Sometimes I do add the caveat that from time to time we ask staff to go experience a different part of life and work, and apply again in 2016.

Sharing this on the behalf of a friend of mine. This part of NH is gorgeous and they classic camp accommodations!

https://www.appone.com/MainInfoReq.asp?R_ID=1026686&B_ID=5&fid;=1&Adid;=&ssbgcolor;=&SearchScreenID;=100

Thanks for that Travis! It was EXACTLY the question that I was asking as I was preparing to post this pretty cool link. It will allow you to spot the international space station as it sails overhead. Very interactive, and really neat. <http://spotthestation.nasa.gov/sightings/index.cfm#.VSHcMN5FBPA>

Looking to buy an insane amount of glow sticks - suggestions on where to buy?

Zach White

You might try Oriental Trading: <http://m.orientaltrading.com/toys-games-and-novelty/glow-products/glow-sticks-a1-550267-1.fltr>

Christopher Bullard

If you aren't particular on colors, I always purchased at Dollar Tree, and I would dig through the bins for the special 4 packs. 25 cents each.

Kelly Rossebo

Amazon

Melissa Freehill

Glowstickwars.com

Abby Jones

We buy ours at: <http://coolglow.com>

Christie Peterson

Oriental Trading or Rhode Island novelty. Google coupon codes.

Jessie Kreider

Dollar Tree If they have the 12-15 packs for \$1 and Michaels Crafts tubes of 12-15 for \$1 also. If not, Oriental trading is my next go to

Stephanie Ruby Compton

I have had a very good experience with these repeatedly. http://www.amazon.com/LumiStick-Brand-Glowsticks-Bracelets-Colors/dp/B000IZ9N78/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid;=1427208034&sr;=8-1&keywords;=glowsticks

Rosemary Pezzuto

Dollar tree and dollar general have bulk buying

Kate Tucci

I just saw 100 glow necklaces for \$7.97 at Pat Catan's- our local arts & crafts supply store yesterday! I thought it was a pretty sweet deal. Unfortunately, you can't purchase them online but maybe check out a cheap arts & crafts store near you (unless you have a Pat Catan's; in which case, I saw them as I was in line at the cashier's stations!)

Cary Shapiro

Ebay has these things in bulk.

Dave Hennessey

Jessica

Megan Gierhart

Dollar Tree! You can buy a case of them from their website.

Shannon L. Caldwell

Just bought some at Dollar Tree. They now have tubes of 20 glow bracelets for \$1.00.

James Davis

I'm not sure, but it sounds like you are an awesome camp director.

Cary Shapiro

Be careful... the ones straight from China tend to leak very very easily!!

Kara Noble

I found some amazing deals on Amazon.

Cookie Joy Mellitz

Oriental trading

Patti Sampson

Hey Emily Kienker, it sounds like you have something fun planned, care to share?
We get a ton of glow sticks donated to us each summer and although we have found many uses for them, I'm always open to new ideas. :)

Rebecca Bobko

Target dollar bin!

Dan Weir

I can't remember where we get them but David or Lindsay may know!

Mischia Hendrick Tinnin

Sometimes the Coleman Store will give us a discount if we buy alot!

Kate Tucci

i love the amount of people who have commented on a post about glow sticks.

David Seddon

Thanks Dan, you know how much I love my glow sticks. <http://www.bestglow.com> (formerly glowrus.com) is who we've used in the past, good prices, quick delivery, very little (if any) breakage, or leakages. Discounts for 501C's.

Michael Garcia Ymca

http://www.orientaltrading.com/premium-tri-color-glow-sticks-a2-24_2257.fltr?prodCatId=550267

Hi all,

We'd like to start staying in touch with our campers outside of their time at camp via e-mail; how do you go about collecting e-mail addresses for minors? What is your experience in sending communication directly to campers?

Kelly Rossebo

We collect it when parents register their child. It's the parents choice to share it. I keep camper email to a minimum.

Jamie Powell

We don't send that type of communication directly to campers, but I've found the best way to engage with them and keep them excited about what's happening at camp is through Instagram. They're on there all the time and they go wild for anything camp related.

David Allen-Hughes

Instagram!!

Amy Edith

Tabel Reyes instagram!

Bethany Ringdal

We don't currently do instagram at all--can you elaborate on how that works?

Kimberley Griffiths

"Remind" which is a one way text. Great resource and free.

David Allen-Hughes

<http://maximizesocialbusiness.com/create-instagram-strategy-business-18218/>

Craig Hicks

Our legal advisor is Dr Richard Hammer, one of the sharpest legal councils out there and he explicitly says, NEVER communicate individually with a minor via email or pvt messages on social media. If you have to communicate something to them, always email the parents.

Laura Fuese Hall

Aside from other concerns, young people don't use email. :)

Camps with Florida campers and/or staff: If you don't want 2-3 week lopped off the upcoming FL summer, speak out NOW.

Like, RIGHT NOW!! :-)

Save Florida Summers Action Alert

Please Call Your Senator NOW An Amendment Has Just Been Filed to

Change the Start Date to August 10th and the Bill the Amendment is Attached to is being Heard NOW.

Use the following link to find your Senator. Emphasis to the person answering the phone that the message needs to be delivered immediately as the amendment is currently being debated on the floor -

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>.

Sample Script

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a constituent of Senator XXX. I know (he or she) is on the floor right now but I respectfully request my message be delivered to him ASAP as it concerns an amendment filed to a bill currently being debated.

I am calling you this afternoon to ask you to please vote against Amendment 877970 filed on SB 616 which will allow the school year to begin August 10th. SB 616 was filed as an Education Accountability bill. It did not include any language changing the school start date requirement. This last minute attempt to amend SB 616 to include changes to the school start date law is nothing more than a last ditch effort to make change without meaningful debate or allowing Senators to understand the consequences an earlier start date creates.

A stand alone bill, SB 688, is currently in the Senate Appropriations committee and, if passed, will change the school start date. A measure this important deserves forethought and study. Not a quick vote as an amendment.

An earlier school start date is not supported by Floridians. A June 2013 public opinion poll by The Kitchens Group showed 79 percent of those polled supported the current start date law or a later start date.

There is no need for the school year to begin earlier to end the first semester before the winter break. Schools already have the option of ending the first semester prior to the Winter Break. Florida Administrative Code 6A-1.045111 requires school districts schedule either 180 school days or the equivalent instructional hours. Lastly, school administrators have extreme flexibility in creating school calendars to best serve the needs of their students under current law. No change is needed.

According to a 2013 report by Capital Analytics starting school early will be devastating to teachers, students and school budgets. Capital Analytics estimates starting school August 10th will cost schools an estimated \$153.2 million in higher utility costs. \$500.6 million in student summer income will be lost and teachers will lose \$154.8 million in cost summer earnings.

Please vote Amendment 877970 and let the school start date issue be fully vetted and understood before making any change.

Cortney Tyger

Marcus Harden, does this effect you?

Tina Bruno

Issue being debated now...if this is of interest to you email me and i will add you to the alert list. SaveFloridaSummers @gmail.com

Tina Bruno

amendment passed...nowwithout strong debate.

Jeff Melrose

This is so frustrating. I called the office of Senator Legg, who put forth the amendment, and he said NO parents had contacted him regarding the start date either way, all his feedback

was from school board members. I pointed out that the state changed the start date due to overwhelming parent interest in a later start to the year, and found it troubling that the only other people giving input were other elected officials but none of the families or businesses who would be impacted by it. He had no comment, only that the bill was "on record for several weeks.

Craig Hicks

Following. #Frustrated

Jeff Melrose

Hi Craig. There's not a lot of cards left to play, but one of the big ones would be to contact the speaker of the FL house and the FL governor. Tina is doing what she can on her end via the media and lobbyists. I'll share the links below, along with a letter I sent to the Orlando Sentinel which was printed today.

Jeff Melrose

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/emailrepresentative.aspx?MemberId=4448&SessionId=76>

Jeff Melrose

<http://www.flgov.com/contact-gov-scott/email-the-governor/>

Jeff Melrose

Subject: Don't start school sooner
I want to express my frustration with the Florida Legislature, which is considering revising our school start date in the current House Bill 7069 and Senate Bill 616.
SB 616 was filed as an education-accountability bill. It initially did not include any language changing the start-date requirement, but it was amended this week to change the date to as early as Aug. 10. The speed with which this took place seems like a last-ditch effort to make change without getting meaningful input from professionals or allowing senators to understand the consequences of an earlier start date.
Significantly, the current date was in place because of educational stakeholders speaking out against the start date creeping ever earlier. Those voices are being disregarded. A measure this important deserves forethought and study, not a quick vote as an amendment. A stand-alone bill, SB 688, is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee, and if passed, it would allow school to start as early as 21 days before Labor Day. I hope parents and teachers speak out now and contact local legislators to request this change be given the due process it deserves.
Jeff Melrose Celebration

Jeff Melrose

I did get a reply when I emailed the speaker, and the gist of it was the speaker wanted to leave it up to school districts how early they want to start, despite past experience showing that if districts start earlier, they will, with the pretense that it will help prepare students for the all-powerful state-mandated assessments.

Jeff Melrose

At this point public opinion is one of the strongest, and only, tools left, and sadly it seems to be widely disregarded by the current legislature. Apparently it isn't an election year for us in Florida this year. :-(

Craig Hicks

Thanks for the info. I will contact them. I think I still have some connections to the Governor as well. I'll exploit any connection I can find.

Jeff Melrose

Please!! This August 10 date is HORRIBLE. Thank you!!

My name is Greg Harris and I most recently took over as Food Service Director for Camp Cullen in Trinity Texas. I'm reaching out to see if anyone out there can give me some good ideas for a three week cycle menu that will give the kids something to write home to mom about. I would also like to keep an open dialogue on sharing of ideas throughout the summer for those interested. Thank you!!

Mike Moose Greenfield

I'm interested in being part of that dialogue. You can find last year's Widjiitiwin 3 week menu in the parents section at www.mycamp.ca.

Luke Bouma

Greg if you go to the file section in this group you will find several meal plans if you dig down.

Greg Harris

Thank both of you guys for replying to my request. I will be equally pro-active in this chat as you would need. Anything else I can be of assistance on please don't hesitate to reach out. Hope you have a good start to camp season!!

greg.harris@ymcahouston.org
936-594-2274

David Ridings

The most common response in our after-camp surveys are about bacon.

Luke Bouma

Not enough bacon? Lol

Garrett Matthew Johnson

Never enough bacon

Diana Raggett Cofer

i took over food service last year and would love to share some tips and ideas back and forth.

Greg Harris

Feel free to contact me at greg.harris@ymcahouston.org. Thank you Diana for responding.

Greg Harris

Does anyone out there have a program to follow and check food cost? I saw one on one of the Camping sights last week and just can't remember where. Thanks

Craig Hicks

Greg Harris I would love to know if such a beast exist. Our food service guy we order from (Sysco) stays on top of current pricing. It fluctuates so much. We just found out candy prices at Sam's has jumped big time from last year.

Working on finding Camp Nurses for the summer. Would love to hear what everyone pays their nurses (especially those who use RNs). Thanks!

Ian Roberts

We are in the same position of trying to find a nurse, and more importantly one that would stick around for more than one season. We currently have the position listed at \$5k-\$6k for an 8-week season. Of course food and lodging is included.

Jeff Benincosa

Superior One EMS located in PA and we supply EMTs for summer camps You may reach us at 814-442-9443

Abby Weber

Jeff do you guys have a website?

Ian Roberts

Sounds great Jeff, however we need an RN.

Angela E. Arneal

We have an RN who visits 2 hours a day, 4 hours on checkin day who we pay \$20/hour. We have a health supervisor who is usually a student who is about to graduate nursing school on site all day everyday who we pay weekly like our administrative staff.

Colin Stewart

Is this at a resident camp, Angela E. Arneal?

Angela E. Arneal

Yes

Colin Stewart

What state?

Angela E. Arneal

LA

Carrie Kishline Lawson

Our RNs are all volunteers, usually in exchange for camper tuition. One week of volunteering = one week of camp for two kids (valued at about \$1200). We have found it's much easier to get an RN for a one-week commitment than for an entire summer.

Angela E. Arneal

We used to do that, but our highest priced summer camp is like \$375. Also, I didn't like the inconsistency in work and paperwork being filed week to week. Last summer was the first summer we operated that way and it worked the best yet.

Find out what works best for your camp and go with it.

Colin Stewart

NY requires a RN 24/7? Such a waste of resources.

Angela E. Arneal

Oh wow! That's an over kill if you ask me. EMS is very close to us as well. They, typically, are better equip to handle emergency situations in my opinion anyway.

Also, I can't afford an RN to be on site for that long lol

Roger Barkman

NYS is ok with LPN, EMT but prefers RN. LPN needs advanced fa and CPR. Your local health inspector might not like an LPN though as per a friend at another camp who says she isn't allowed to use one. Try sending letters to local area schools c/o school nurse and or food service director if you are looking for kitchen help. All are off for the summer

Thomas A. Hall

In CT, we have been fortunate to find a semi-retired RN who is in residence for 10 weeks @ \$400/wk.

Tom Cramer

Thanks for all the responses!

Amanda Grassick

I run 3 camps for kids with type 1 diabetes and hire about 50 nurses a summer. It's a mix of returning nurses and new grads. It might be worthwhile to talk to local college/universities with nursing program. We've had luck advertising to nursing schools and getting new grads who are just finishing school in the spring. It's a great first time nursing job. We look for new grads who have previous camp and wilderness first aid experience so they aren't super green.

Michael Petitpas

Roger Barkman, the code is the code. Inspectors can go on about their preferences as much as they want, but they cannot make you exceed the code. If your inspector continues to give you problems for following the code, go to his supervisor.

Craig Hicks

We use 2 paramedics that rotate 1 week on 1 week off and we pay 350-500/week depending on camp size that week.

Craig Hicks

The beauty of paramedics is they specialize in emergencies, especially trauma. And they have no prob managing meds.

Got friends or family dreaming of building summer camp in China? This just in from ACA blast!

***ACITIVITY SPECIALIST - CHINA**

Are you ready for a real adventure? We are seeking experienced camp counselors to help us establish summer camps in China. We will provide your flights (flight allowance of \$1500), visa, housing, and some spending money, and you will get to be a part of an education revolution in the biggest country in the world. We have positions open for both Resident Camp (Qinhuangdao) and Day Camp (Beijing). Both camps run from 6/2/15 to 8/22/15. China has a social skills gap and sees American camps as part of the solution. Your experience will be vital in helping shape the 21st century in the world's fastest growing economy. Please contact Ben at bbaiaimonte@campchampions.com to express interest. Include a phone number and Resident or Day Camp preference. You will need a passport valid for 6

months beyond your stay in China. There may also be longer-term opportunities for those who are interested in staying to work beyond the summer.

Lau Rel

Dates?

Hannah Hudson

6/2/15 to 8/22/15 with opportunities for beyond

Kris Ebner Martin

Will you be searching for any administrators? Am experienced resident camp director of 14 years... would have to be 2016 at this point, though!

Hannah Hudson

"Please contact Ben at bbaiamonte@campchampions.com to express interest. Include a phone number and Resident or Day Camp preference."
I'm just a bringer of cool news ;)

Mark Weller

Mark Weller

FULL-TIME, LEADERSHIP POSITION WITH AVID4 ADVENTURE available now.

Regional Manager - Washington DC Metro Area - Open and Manage new summer adventure day camps (climbing, padding, biking, and outdoor education).

Read full job description and apply online - www.avid4.com/jobs/positions/.
Let me know if you have any questions - paul@avid4.com.

Today, from a returning staff member:

"Oh yeah, about my camp job, I might get a job coaching and that would screw up being able to work at camp. Just letting you know."

Approximately 4 months after assuring me he would be at camp full time this summer, and approximately 1 month after finalizing my staff, which is extremely small (6 counselors total, who double as lifeguards, etc.).

Angela E. Arneal

..... If he's signed paperwork committing already, I'd hold him to it... tell him you need a commitment now. If he cannot give it, you cannot guarantee you'll need him.

Chris Kaake

I did tell him that...my concern is that I don't actually have anyone to replace him with, because we didn't have a lot of applicants to begin with and now I have to find someone who will be an excellent counselor AND can be trained as a lifeguard. Right now I'm just glad this group exists because I know you all feel my pain!

Angela E. Arneal

To be honest, I'd find someone to replace him and then tell him his services aren't needed.

Kristen Parkin

As inconvenient as it is- We are an at will employer and they have entered into an at will job. Perhaps the person you replace him with will be greater than ever.

Nathan Charles

This may be unpopular, but it is the nature of the business we work in. We primarily employ young college students who are not planning on making this a career, we should always hire at least 1 more person than needed for the summer for reasons exactly like this. These individuals who have other plans come up are not bad or irresponsible, but in fact I see them as being proactive in identifying alternate pathways for what they see as being more important. In a early part of my camp career (2009) I was a staff member at a camp, hired the whole 9 yards and due to another better camp opportunity I took another job 5 days before the summer started. Did it suck for the camp, yes of course, but was it beneficial for me? Yes, so be prepared and build this into your action plan because of course this will happen and it will always happen in our line of work.

Chris Kaake

If I had the opportunity to hire more people than I need, I certainly would. Unfortunately our board has made it clear that I am not allowed to hire more than 6 staff members--which isn't even enough. Believe me, I understand the nature of our business. I just happen to dislike that part of it and wish it could be different.

Angela E. Arneal

College kids or not, I would use it as an opportunity to teach a valuable lesson. Professionalism. Commitments are important whether in a career or just a summer job. The employee has to realize that. I would set a deadline and ask him to have his final answer in, say, a week. Explain to him that you'll need to have time to fill his shoes. If he can't make the commitment or all he can do is send an unprofessional message like he sent you, I'd explain to him that your business cannot make a commitment to him either.

Nathan Charles

Then you need to terminate his contract, time: now, and find someone ASAP. On the flip side of my previous comment (as you all role your eyes and say "duh"), we run businesses if it be not not for profit or for-profit. And we have to maintain the best interests of our camps. Even if it feels like we should have the best interest of our staffers as well. it sucks, but it's one of those things that just has to happen.

Molly McCue

Not fun to get the "if nothing better comes up" type of communication from staff about returning to camp. I understand and respect that when speaking with staff who have yet to make a decision about returning to camp. And I do also understand that other opportunities come up for people who have already said yes to a camp job that might be a better fit for them. That's all well and good, but does it affect their professional reputation, at least with you? Of course. This is a job.

Boo.

Angela E. Arneal

I agree with Nathan-- my job is to give the kids a good experience. If my staff decides to have fun while doing so, great, but they aren't my focus. They're getting paid to do a job.

Chris Kaake

Definitely! Campers first and foremost, always.

Janet Keilen

Frustrating, isn't it!

Kate Tucci

I went for three walks on Monday due to staffing stresses! I get the frustration! Keep your head up, cut your losses and move forward!

James Lortie

Ok.

1. Breathe. It's all good. A little bit of hope and positivity goes a long way and this too shall pass. You will find someone, there's still time!

2. Give him a ticking clock. When this happens to me, and I'm in a crunch, I give them a ticking clock.

Say "Sorry to hear you may not be able to return, that's a shame. I understand that you may have other goals in mind. However, I do need to know soon since staffing with us can be difficult. Therefore, I'll need to know by X DATE if you'll be returning with us this summer. If I don't hear from you by then, I'll have to assume you've taken another opportunity and that I need to move forward with hiring a new person. I can't be left hanging."

James Lortie

Slash maybe leave the "I can't be left hanging" part out. I tend to be on the blunter side of Camp Directors.

Kristen Parkin

It's ok to put a date of need to know by and I would begin looking

Patti Sampson

I'm so sorry to hear that! It's so frustrating when that happens, and I think you're right we can all relate. I realize that you weren't looking for advice and just wanted to vent to a group of people who feel your pain, so I won't offer any unsolicited advice and just tel you that you're right, it's a bummer and I'm really sorry for your troubles!!!
We're here if you want to vent some more and also WHEN it all gets worked out! (Cause it will) :)

Curt Jackson

The bigger concern to me is that you are working for a board that won't support your hiring needs of more staff. Maybe it's you that needs a new job. If I didn't have a board or a boss that I could count on to do what's best for the campers and the camp as a whole that would put undue stress on me and I wouldn't be there for long. I am sorry you're in that situation, Chris.

Mary Constance

As we say at Camp Allen: he doesn't get camp!

Ben Smoky Radley

I've learned the hard way that the majority of the time holding someone to their contract that doesn't want to be at camp leads to real staff chemistry problems. Camp is touch enough with out someone with a consistent bad attitude from the get go. Just because there is a body in the space doesn't mean it will be a good thing. (Aside from my stress of finding a qualified body!)

Chris Kaake

I DO need a new job! That's the plan once we get through summer. And yes, we've also learned that just having the right number of bodies on staff causes problems! This particular staff member has been exceptional in the past, but if he's in the mindset that camp is a fall back plan then it's likely he wouldn't be as excellent this year anyway. Bring on the stress of staff recruiting, part two (IN APRIL)

Robert Lawton

I disagree with the idea of giving the wavering staffer a deadline to let you know for sure. When that date rolls around, the staffer will always say "yes" just so they have a place to go if the other job falls through. This leaves you in the same position you are in now - only later in the game.

Your best bet is to ask them, "when will you know for sure?" This takes away their ability to cover their bases with a "yes" - and you'll likely get the date that their other prospective employer gave them.

Now, if you can easily find a replacement after that date, then it doesn't hurt to wait. However, you noted that you're going to have a hard time finding a staffer at all. The solution then is quite clear. Start looking for a replacement immediately. If you find one, hire him or her and then let your other staffer know that the job has been filled. As noted above, you have to do what's best for your campers.

Andrea Nash Boynton

I completely understand where you are coming from. That is a really frustrating experience. May things improve for you!

If you have a dark sense of humor and wish a chuckle . . .
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY0WxgSXdEE>

Scottie Roach

That is fun- not

Amanda Grassick

Chris - we address the need for a backup staff by actually telling someone they are the backup and hiring them as such. We invite them to staff training but don't make any commitments after that. If someone quits or has to leave they step in. At minimum they feel like you have invested something in them and are more likely to apply in following years.

If you had to spend \$250,000 in the next 8hrs, what would you spend it on?!?

Zach Denny

A huge Wibit

Lori Rosene

Replace a truck and a vehicle that can transport campers, build 2 new cabins, add a bathroom closer to cabin area.

Jennifer Lee

A new barn and updated riding area to start!

Ryan J Gagnon

Air conditioning

John Waldo

Updating all technology in your camp (computers, wifi access points, TVs, video projectors, sound systems, maybe phones, two-way radios). New signage? Buying supplies for long term preventative maintenance things (shingles, siding, paint). Update food service equipment? Depending on where you're located, snow removal equipment and/or lawn equipment. Basically, ANYTHING YOU CURRENTLY HAVE TO JURY-RIG TO KEEP IT WORKING. :)

Laura Fuese Hall

New bunks and mattresses for the whole camp, replace heat/ac in one building, replace furnace in 3 cabins...would love to be tasked with that challenge!

Preston Podolske

Staff housing!!!!

Ryan J Gagnon

Wifi

Angela E. Arneal

Cover our outdoor arena, but I'm sure that'd cost more than that. Replace our golf carts, update technology, New swimming pool, extend Lake

Angela E. Arneal

Oh and add a barn loft type deal with plumbing and a small kitchen.

Dan Weir

Update older cabins and a giant library allowing all campers to take home a book (Lindsay!)

Laura Edwards

I'd buy some land so we can have our own camp space and build log cabins and a centre :)

Kevin O'Sullivan

A free week of camp for every camper in 2015! It would be awesome to give everyone their money back!!

Joseph Marciszyn

Nature Explore Classroom and a second floor building renovation.

Bill Waite

Administrative Housing....

Matthew Greene

Schoalrship endowmnet to benefit the camp for years to come

Stephen Maguire

bicycles

Aaron Cantor

Glowsticks

Joe Fortin

Spotting scopes, cameras, climbing wall, canoes, voyageur canoes, Gator

Lisa Melnyk

Stand Up paddle board and water features!

Elisabeth Buckley

Update cabins, bathhouses at my childhood camp.

Andrew Lalley

Mercedes SL65 AMG.....for marketing trips of course.....

Katie Byrd

All the climbing towers!

Scotty Jackson

Endowment!

Malissa Schmitz

New camp land and buildings

I just read the latest email newsletter from Curt Jackson - he's got a killer round-table coming up. You NEED to be a part of it! <http://summercampprogramdirector.com/email-roundtable-faqs/> #choosecamp

Hannah Hudson

That's so funny! I nearly had a heart attack cause I thought it was THIS round table and thought "OMG! The camp world KNOWS!" (Notice the logo.) Lol
<http://www.heroroundtable.com/>

Do you want to help your camp's CITs / LITs become better LEADers? Our Teen LEADership conference is a one-day event that brings together camp leaders that range in grade from Freshman to Junior year of High School. LEAD has been designed to educate teen leaders on leadership, communication and professionalism as it relates to camp and also how these skills transfer to the real world. This conference will feature keynote speaker, Scott Arizala, informative breakout sessions all led by camp professionals and fun with other teen leaders!

Kayla Ryan

This is awesome! Is there a facebook or instagram page I can share?

For those of you with Gaga Ball pits, have any of you ever built your own? What are the advantages to purchasing one vs. building one?

Shaune Randles

Curious...

Marie-Pierre Lacasse

Following

Dave Thoensen

Far cheaper to build your own. If you have the resources, I highly recommend.

Dianne Chamberlain

Way cheaper to build your own!

Casey Hart

Colin Stewart

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

We built our own- it's way way cheaper and it can be moved if necessary.

Kelly Vidovich

We have large mats that we used to build our own indoor and it works perfectly..may not be the correct dimensions but it gets the job done!

Elisa DayCamp

Built our own. Looked up dimensions and gave to property manager..had lumber donated

Jim Hooper

We, too, built our own. We had a local metal fabricator build the corner brackets (he ended up donating them) and then we bought the lumber. The only headache we've had is the fact that the fabricator gave us the brackets, but our caretaker drilled the holes. Therefore the holes in each bracket are unique in placement. This makes it much more challenging to set up each spring. We've labeled each bracket and each board so that we can reassemble in exactly the same configuration each spring.

Jane Riedy Flanagan

Following

Roger Barkman

Following

Chris Retz

We made our own brackets and purchased the lumber

Marcie Glad

We built one. We lease the land from the forest service and can't build permanent structures, so we built one out of boards and rebar that can be disassembled easily and put in storage. It was pretty quick and easy to build. It's not as stable as other ones. Someone was able to donate the wood, so our only cost was the rebar.

Thomas A. Hall

We built several, using heavy duty hinges on the corners. Quick and easy to build, take apart to move or store, and reassemble. Dimensions do not matter.

Mary M Siniard

We build our's using CT Camp Guys tutorial - minus the fancy corners :)

Sarah Bell

We built ours, and its on hinges, so we can take it indoors if we want (though its really heavy!), and store it indoors for the winter.

Kate Fox

<http://www.gagaballpits.com> We used these brackets. We take it down at the end of the season. Coach Cliff's is the answer!

Brad Cripe

We got the corners from coach cliff. Much easier to move and get the angles right.

Michael Garcia Ymca

We built and we saved \$\$\$\$ Home Depot donated lumber, alumni put it together for 1/2 the cost of a purchased kit.

Kris Ebner Martin

We built ours as well. Not very expensive.

Laura Petersen

Building your own allows you to decide the materials (and possibly get them donated) as well as the size of pit you want. I built one once that ended up being too big. The next one was much better!

Adam Wallach

Here is another option, fully portable gaga system. Great for rainy days and ability to move around to prevent the gaga mud/dust bowl. Offering \$1495 special between ACA NE and ACA Mid-States conferences with free delivery for the full system. Lots of flexiblity for year round use. www.gagacourt.com

Mark Carrick

Buying one is far more cost effective. Even if it's an Eagle Scout volunteer project.

Mark Carrick

We have built two in house at Surf . both Eagle Scout projects.

Help! What immunizations do you require for campers and for staff? Meningitis? Pneumonia? Flu?

Do you follow the CDC Schedules?

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adult.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/preteen-teen.html>

Rosemary Pezzuto

What ever our school systems require

Dan Lichtenstein

ACA has actually addressed this in its standards update (new for the summer of 2015). HW.5.1 D deals with camper immunizations and says that campers need a statement showing that they have all up to date immunizations required for school. Its a mandatory standard, but does allow for a waiver for families who choose not to immunize for religious or "other" reasons.

There is no standard regarding staff, but this may actually be a more significant issue, especially when hiring international staff. If you expect your staff to be immunized, look at this right away. You don't want to find out on June 1st that a key staff member doesn't have immunizations that you are requiring.

Looking for some pricing on putting in a Giant Swing. Can anyone tell me about what you may have paid?

Some references for companies that build them as well would be greatly appreciated as well.

Dan DeMatte

Following

Jerrold Henoeh

<http://www.adventureworks.org/>

Jason Ostroski

Rich Rupert

Dave Hennessey

Alpine Towers International is who we have worked with in the past, and I would highly recommend them.

Ha Rothenberg

Innerquest

Dave Hennessey

Innerquest is good too.

Mike Stillson

Look into Signature Research. We installed 2 Triple Giant Swings and it's great having an activity for multiple participants.

Kevin Browne

CUI is great but also like adventure works

Noah Gallagher

Anyone with ACCT cert should be good. I've had good experiences with Innerquest and ABEE.

Dan DeMatte

Aaron Richards

Dan O'Neil

innerquest!

Kevin O'Sullivan

Thanks everyone!!

Rich Rupert

The Summit. They are located in Pennsylvania. They do great work for us at YMCA Camp Ockanickon. Al Reisser is the owner. Their website is <http://www.thesummitusa.com/>

What sorts of gifts do you give to commemorate the number of years campers/staff have been at camp? I'm looking for something they can have for every year and add on to or something that they can collect. Thoughts Pros?

Dusti Mahoney

We do the top fire for the first year of attendance and the little log every year after that. We've been doing it for decades... so some of the historical ceremonial campfire outfits will have loads of them.

Vanessa Grose

We talked about this for our camp. How do you track it or do you just go by what the camper says. We are old school and don't really have a good tracking system for campers. Most kids we just know they are returners by site and knowing them.

Kate Taylor

We have progressing embroidered patches for the first 6 years, at seven you get a pin, and at ten you get a painted canoe paddle. A few other special milestone things for the few and far between who get further than that! :D

Dusti Mahoney

We just trust the kids. The thing is... its hard to "lie" about it... most kids know if its their first year so they get a fire. And you can only get the log if you're actually *at* camp. When we hand them out at campfire its totally possible a kid isn't sure if they've been coming to camp for 6 years or 7... but they get their log anyhow. We don't do anything special beyond a round of applause for camper with most years at camp.

Kate Taylor

(Oh yes, to answer that secondary question we track in Camp Brain. But generally the kids are pretty honest/up-front about correct us if our list is wrong for whatever reason. They want the proper set of progressive patches)

Dusti Mahoney

Another camp did a bead necklace system. You got a necklace with a penny from that year and a blue bead your first year. Every camper year got another blue bead- CIT and staff and other things were all specific colors as well. I still have mine from when I was a camper and have been wanting to add to it some more.

Kate Taylor

That reminds me of the system they have at Camp Half Blood in the Percy Jackson books ;) A painted bead for each summer with a symbol from a big event of the summer on it :D Such a cool idea, especially if you're the type of camp to have a summer theme!

Dusti Mahoney

Yet another camp (I've been around it seems) did a white patch with the camp emblem on it every year of camp. And a blue patch for every 5th year. Your first 5th year you got to stand in front of the whole camp and talk about why you loved camp. On your 10 year a special ceremony was planned for you by people in camp who meant a lot to you and you got littl gifts and things to remind you of camp- your 10 year was usually right around your CIT

year. I think for 15 you get your name on a plaque that lives in the dining hall and for 20 you get a grand super special 10 year.

Ross Barnes

Andrew Mish Hood

Nicole Amedeo Griffith

Josh Greenbaum Jack Griffith

Travis Allison

We learned, from Dave Graham's old camp, about 10 Year Paddles. We don't give them to take home but we put them up in the dining hall.

Paul Bryant

we give campers a year patch each year. We also give 5 year watches and put all 5 year campers/staff on a canoe paddle plaque in the dining hall.

Dexter N Jackson

Hey Travis Allison where do you buy your paddles from? I've been looking for two summers and I can not find a feasible vendor.

Jason Smith

We give a medallion at 5 years, a lapel pin at 6,7,8 and 9 years, and a picture frame at 10. The pins fit inside the medallion and I hope to get the picture frame to hold the whole thing as we need to order more this year.

Jason Smith

Pins in the medallion.

Jason Smith

We post names of people who received the year awards from the prior year in our Dining Hall. We keep track primarily by trusting the kid, and referring to last year's list. So if they are 13 and saying it is their 8th year (we start at 7) we look into the last year's awards, and our registration records, but we don't do it for everyone.

Amy Heidotten

Love your ideas and that you do this!! I worked at a camp for 21 years and nothing :(...My day camps do a bead system!!

Hollie Penuel

Diane Jackson

Travis Allison

Dexter N Jackson - our paddles are pre-cut for the season by a volunteer and then Chantal Jackson supervises some staff to do the lettering/routering/burning.

Bethany Ringdal

For 50 years we've been giving every camper and staff a necklace with a chi-rho cross (our symbol) on a leather string. You get a knot for every year you come to camp--very cool!

Jeff Rocco

We do t-shirts...all the same style just with numbers for 3-5-7-9 years

Lori Rosene

Jason Smith where do you order your medallions and pins from. VERY COOL idea :)

Jason Smith

Lori we worked with a local trophy shop in Lincoln, Nebraska called Rixstine Recognition. <http://www.rixstine.com/cgi-bin/commerce.cgi?display=home> it took some back and forth to make it all work. It came together though.

Hollie Penuel

Jason Smith - Who made that product for you?

Jason Smith

Hollie - We worked with a local award store, Rixstine Recognition (Link Above) they were able to get it produced for us.

Camp Jewell YMCA has as exciting new role available. Would you be interested in helping make Camp Jewell YMCA a better place for all? Or perhaps you know someone that would be a great addition to the team. We currently have an opening for our Food Service Manager.

The Food Service Manager has primary responsibility for the leadership and administration of a comprehensive dining services department here at camp. For more information click here....

<https://ghymca.applicantpro.com/jobs/205006.html>

James Davis

I may have a great lead. Will refer him to this.

Employment!

Camp Fire Georgia (Northeast Georgia)

Summer resident, Day Camp, City Pool, kitchen, lifeguards, maintenance!

Camp Fire Georgia is accepting applications for summer employment. We have positions available at Camp Fire Camp Toccoa, Camp WoHeLo Day Camp and the Doyle Street Pool for camp counselors, kitchen staff, lifeguards and maintenance staff. Applications, job descriptions and additional information can be found at www.camptoccoa.org

Emaly Allison

Suz Welch

Sounds great. Hope you get some great applications!

Wohelo

Suz

Suz Welch

1414 Oriole Road

Boone, IA 50036

515-230-5869

Great conversation this AM with my MasterMinds group -- Thank you, Adam, Ruby, Chantal, and Travis! Can't be in the same room with them until maybe next year's TriState conference, but seeing them on Skype was almost as good. The pic below is of four of us (We're only missing Travis) at #TSCamp2015. Have no idea what I am talking about? You need to check this out -- <http://camphacker.tv/what-is-a-mastermind-group/> -- it will be worth your time, I guarantee it!

Blake Sunshine Leiber

That is a power group if I ever did see one!!

Bill Waite

Hi Tink!

Tink Rabey-Hall

Thank you, Blake, we do our best! Hi Bill! Great to "see" you :)!

Travis Allison

Smart folks helping each other get smarter every call!

Looking into 9 square in the air. Looking for suggestions on buying/building and saving money. Feel free to PM me

Tink Rabey-Hall

We bought the Connector Kit only from <http://store.9squareintheair.com/> when we purchased three years ago. Then purchased the other pvc here in town. Worth the money! Our kids and staff LOVE this game -- it is chosen as often as GaGa which is HUGE here. Go for it!

Chris Kaake

What kind of camp? I ask because we're a Christian camp and we asked churches affiliated with us to help us buy the game (either the whole thing or the supplies and connector kit to DIY) and offered to let people borrow it if we get the whole game that can be set up and torn down easily. They really loved the idea of being able to borrow it from us and still have it available to all campers and even other churches. Even if you aren't church-affiliated, maybe you have other community partners you could set up a system with to help you pay for it and then use it for their own activities.

Hanna A. Krogmann

I've played and really loved it. We are a YMCA camp.

Andrea J Steffens

I'm in the process of doing this DIY without the connector kit or instructions.....basically winging it! we just went for it!

Dan Madura

We saw it at ACA and fell in love with the idea. Adding on to what Tink said, the connector kit can save a lot of money - if you happen to have the equipment to cut and fit it with PVC pipe.

Additionally, if you have space, you could theoretically build your own using wood and keep the cost down. The big downside is that you won't be able to move it, or adjust the height for different ages, but if you're looking to get it for kids 8 - 13, those age groups should have no problem with having it at the same, fixed height.

Hanna A. Krogmann

Andrea I have a feeling we will end up going with the building thing also. However I want to do the correct research to take back to my director. Dan we have campers 1st grade through high school so I'm hoping to have adjustment some how or build two

George DeTellis Jr.

We bought from 9squareintheair.com We have 2 of them. You just cut down the PVC pipe that you buy at Lowes or Home Depot

John Mark Moore

We have one and love it. I especially like that ours is telescoping, that way we can play with different size kids in the same court.

Katherine Parnell

Following!

Joe Richards

We love the adjustable height. We own 2 sets and they were worth every penny. 9 Square has a church / religious discount. Have heard of wooden ones blowing down in high winds.

Caterina Kolkman Maw

Tobe Johnson still want this for camp.

Jed Buck

Highly Recommend it. To save money, you can just by connectors from them and supply your own pipe. Not sure how that works, but I recall that is an option they offer in addition to the full kit.

Birthday celebration alternatives to "Skip Around the Room?" Please and thanks. Go!

Hanna A. Krogmann

A large bear hug from their living group or staff.

Marcie Glad

They get to be the taste-tester for the meal. Take a bite, think about it, and give it a thumbs up, met with thunderous applause.

Christie Peterson

We have a Birthday Brigade - our Junior Counselors tip toe into the cabin in the wee hours and decorate, hang streamers on the cabin door, make signs, etc. Now, all the other campers (and counselors!) in the cabin know there's a birthday from the moment their feet touch the floor!

Scott Black

Potato gun?

Jodie Adams

We had a birthday wheel with prizes that they got to spin

Iris Maslow

I second potato gun!

Abbie Orozco

Check the search function, I believe there is a long thread on the subject of birthday traditions. :)

YMCA Camp Carter is looking to host a Camp Equestrian Conference and we would like some feedback on potential topics and dates.

Can you please share this survey link with any Equestrian or Horse people (inside the Y and out) who might be interested in an Equestrian Conference?

We are targeting the Conference for the beginning of February and think the fees should be between \$225-300 for the 3-day Conference including meals and evening entertainment.

More details on the conference are included inside the survey link. Please complete the survey by April 15, so we can begin the planning process as early as possible.

<https://ymcafortworth.formstack.com/forms/eqinterest>

Thanks for sharing!

Deer Valley Meadows Camp and Conference Centre, near Red Deer Alberta, is looking for a full time year-round, long-term Christian maintenance man. Self motivator is a must. Farm raised a bonus. Wife and children are welcome! This is a salaried position with benefits. The camp has no debt, a balanced budget, and no major issues. It is located on the Red Deer River on 140+ acres of woodlands and meadows. All buildings have been fully renovated within the last 7 years. Housing is provided onsite. Contact Del @ (403) 747-2100 for other details.
<http://www.deervalleymeadows.ca/>

I am interviewing a new assistant director candidate next week. The job is essentially sales, recruitment, communication, social media, and program. What are some of your best interview questions and techniques?

Mike Douglass

A bat and a ball costs a \$1.10. The bat is \$1 more than ball. How much does the ball cost?

Mike Douglass

Wait for it

Coleman Weibley

My favorite question (and how I normally end an interview) is "If you could be any animal, what animal would you be and why?" --- Really can tell a lot about a person!

Coleman Weibley

I also have friend who was recently asked, "Whats the riskiest thing you've ever done."

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

What do you read in your spare time ? Can tell if they're current , well you'll figure out what you need to with that question. I was asked that once.

Noah Gallagher

I end interviews with "Was there a question you hoped I would ask you and/or an answer you hoped to give?" It gives applicants a chance to present themselves in the way they hoped. It also gives me a sense of how (or if) they prepared.

Kim Steward Betts

Tell me something you are proud of. Tell me about a time you had to work with a difficult person and how you handled it. Tell me about a time you quit a job or commitment or a time you wanted to quit and stuck something out. Those are my faves for seasonal staff.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

I like the questions that take interviews a little deeper. So you ask something basic like "Why do you want to work at camp?". You listen to their answer and then ask why whatever they said is important to them. We all want to work with kids and spend the summer outside. But finding out the intention behind that (or lack thereof) can be very revealing.

Kevin Browne

My favorite is asking what is there 5 year plan?

Casey Sukeforth

Recently my two favorites have been: tell me about one time you broke the 'rules', and what is one thing you would love to learn in the next year.

Ashley House

Gary forester has an interview process that I use for ALL staff. Every department I hire for. It asks for stories and things they have done versus answers where they just try to please you (what would your friends say about you? Etc. gag)
I just tweet some of the smaller points to make it fit for the position. You can find it on his website!

Herb Toplan

Research behavior based interviewing questions. Correlate what they have done in the past to match the skills you are seeking.

Trey Archambault

What would be your course of action if you noticed a usually proficient staff member suddenly start to under perform?

Really interesting podcast from TED Radio Hour re the impact of PLAY, particularly the segment from Dr. Stuart Brown analysing what happens when children don't have enough time to play.

Kate Tucci

I jumped for joy when I was listening to this podcast!!

Rob Carmichael

Totally agree Kate! I was riding my bike home and stopped to listen to some parts (to avoid riding into a light post!) :)

Good Morning #camppros !

I hope you are all well,

I have run into an interesting opportunity for those interested in wilderness camping and tripping programmes that I thought I could pass along.

Take a look if you are interested,

Registration closes April 10th!

I received a book of curriculum from the company Acorn Naturalists. Are their curriculum and materials of good quality and backed by research? Does anyone know?

Andrea Suzanne

I work at an environmental education center and we order supplies from Acorn Naturalists. I can't speak for the curriculum but the materials are great!

Ashley Powell

Thanks, Andrea Suzanne!

Our age cutoff for camp is 12 we have had parents approach is about accepting their 13 year olds some because they have siblings some for other reasons. How would you handle this situation?

Andrea Groves

We have a 6 month rule. If they have turned 13 within 6 months of the first day of camp, we accept them. But we also ask the parent about the child's maturity, comfort with kids who may be a bit younger, and just general development level.

Jason Smith

Always a challenge. If you aren't sold out it is very tempting. You have to weigh the positives (more income) with any negatives (will that 13 year old be in a group with an 11 year old? Can you run a good program for the 13 year old?). Like Andrea says there are some questions you can ask. We also have made parents sign an "out of range" note which just says they understand that they are asking for their child to be placed in a program that is outside our recommended age frame.

Rick Doucette

We bumped our age range to include 13's several years back. Will likely bump to include 14 next year. We currently have a "Leader In Training" for 14s & 15s - this will offer a parallel track.

Jason Smith

Great way to capitalize on what parents are asking for Rick! Heather Zeller if some parents are asking chances are there are more who aren't asking but wish you had a program for 13 year olds. Might be time to make some calls or place an email to see if you could get some in!

Heather Zeller

We run a year round youth program at night. We don't have many 13 year olds but there have been numerous problems with this age range. We have more of an indoor program not at a camp

Rick Doucette

Years and years ago, many kids felt they were "too old" for camp at 11 or 12. By creating more dynamic programming, coupled with today's protective bubble-wrap nature of parenting (less risk-taking, less independence) we've seen a strong retention of our older campers...and it's been a great way to "grow our own" staff...80% of our staff have grown up with me at our camp.

Jason Smith

Heather would a leadership development/service program be in order? Could you have 13 year olds "help" with programming and give them a strong set of role model expectations. They could even apply for it. At my camp in the late 70's a few kids got too old for the program, and begged to come back. They said they would do dishes, anything. The director said "ok you can come back and do the dishes", and out of that foundation has grown a year around program CIT program with 120 annual participants that still to this day does all of our dishes.

Heather Zeller

The program used to have one but I don't think they had proper leadership and the kids that are interested in coming are not interested in leadership they want to play video games and go in the gym. Mostly boys not girls

Grego Dow

Any time you set an age limit, you will find there is always someone asking you to make an exception for them (both up and down). It might be worth looking into programs for the older ages, but may not be feasible within your budget etc. for this coming summer. If you don't think that age group is something you can accomodate this year within the program you have already planned then it might be wise to say no with a "we're working on something for next year" clause.

Heather Zeller

Yes at this point I am feeling like it is a little late to pull something together but definitely something to work on for next year :)

Andrea J Steffens

We also get this question, I allow 13 year olds as long as they turned 13 with in the summer months, we allow 13 year olds as volunteers or CIT's and I only allow 5 CIT's per summer and they have to have attended our camp in the past. They apply and interview for the CIT spots.

Dave Hennessey

If you need a hard-and-fast rule, setting program limits by "grade" is more effective than age many times. 9th graders can be several different ages, but introducing a high-schooler to your program can alter it dramatically.

David Richard Butts

I'd accept older kids. We have for decades with no problem. Unless your occupancy rates are at 100%, why wouldn't you too?

Katrina Zettlemoyer Moncrieffe

We try to give the families with siblings one year of a grace period with the reminder that their child can not return the following year.

Curt Jackson

Stick to your guns. Once you start making exceptions to your policy the word gets out and other exceptions will be requested.

On the flip side, you mentioned that you have had problems with that age group in the past. Middle school kids are my favorite age to work with. I love the challenge and programming opportunities for that group. Finding the right person is key to running a recreation (non-camp) program like you describe. I would seriously look at trying to serve that population next year. There are a lot of ways you can go about it. If you decide to offer a program for 13 and or 14 year olds next year message me later in the year and I'll give you some programming tips to consider. Years of being a recreation teen supervisor has given me some insight.

Ben Smoky Radley

We found that going by grades worked better for us as well. We have a real miss mash around here as to what ages move to which grades per school district. When you have a kid whose classmates are 6 months younger than they are, and they can't go to the same week of camp it's rough.

Okay this is one of those dreaded topics....Bed Bugs...what is your policy in this area? Here is the situation. We had a group here two weekends ago that experienced bed bugs in 1 room of a cabin. (We have had the whole cabin checked and was just in one room, but treated the whole cabin anyway to be on the safe side). Two women were in this room and received numerous bites from the bugs during the last night of their stay. We were notified by the group leader and a nurse within the group they were bed bug bites. We have reimbursed the two women's retreat costs for their entire stay including meals. The women left their bedding items here no longer wanting them given the bed bugs. Once home they also had their coats dry cleaned and one lady went to the doctor for her bites and got a shot for them for the way her body reacted to them. We are now faced with them feeling a reimbursement for their stay is not enough compensation for having left their bedding items here (sleeping bags and memory foam pillows) for us to dispose of, dry cleaning their coats and one having gone to the doctor. The camp is all clear and treated at this point and time....so that part is no longer the issue. We are now dealing with more of an emotional situation than a replace my stuff situation. Has anyone experienced this type of situation? What have you done?

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Oh yes... bed bugs. The words that even Camp Directors whisper! The pests-that-shall-not-be-named that we all deal with! First of all, MANY of us deal with this, even though we still whisper it. LOL Bed bugs ARE emotional for people. I would take a head lice conversation over bed bugs ANY day. People freak out with bed bugs. Be sure to listen. Share your feelings that bed bugs are a pest that nobody wants to deal with and unfortunately at camp we deal with them from time-to-time just like hospitals, theaters, hotels, etc. do. It's completely your call on replacing sleeping bags and paying for the dry cleaning. It's NOT your responsibility, but it is your choice if you want to make a good will offer. If the sleeping bags were Wal-Mart sleeping bags I'd do it. If they are \$100+ sleeping bags I would remind them that it was their choice to leave the sleeping bags and heat treatment in the dryer is very effective in killing bed bugs. Happy campers don't continue to spread discontent about your facilities, so my goal is to have happy campers. That being said I don't do things such as heat treat an entire house, etc. Our prevention plan goes a LONG way in helping us deal with cases when/if they occur. We have a pest control company that comes in with the dogs every other month. If they find something they treat, however since we started a testing schedule we have only had one incident. It was SO nice to be able to pull the report and say "We were clean of bed bugs 2 weeks ago" etc. It shows

campers and parents that we are aware and trying. We have also put out a new product (new to us anyway) called "indicators" in each bunk room and hallway. \$26.00 to purchase with a \$9 refill every 3 months. (Google bedbug indicators for more info). I like them because now we are not relying ONLY on people having bites or visual checks to find bedbugs. This has also helped to soothe an angry parent. I have the message that says "yes, it's a concern for us that we deal with through our preventative plan. I'm so sorry that we missed a couple and we have dealt with them immediately. Here is how we prevent and detect." Sometimes I shake my head over how much time I put into preventing bed bugs here, however it is such an emotional topic with people that it's worth the time even when we only deal with finding them once a year. WAY better to find and kill two than to have those two canoodle and create many many more! Down with bed bugs. My next campaign should be to stop the whispering... bed bugs are pests too! HAHAAHA

Courtney Jewell Abernathy

Oh no!

David Toth

Our policy: we don't allow them

Elise Bates Russell

Do you have a camp doc who is excellent in relating to fussy patients and can call and dispel some fears? Obviously they have the bites but maybe an expert doc's opinion who has experience with the pests will help to calm her.

Camp pros- I would love to see your Pinterest pages and family scheduling/camp activities. I run a weekend family camp for deaf and hard of hearing families in southern California.

Curt Jackson

<https://www.pinterest.com/recreationpros/>

Kristal Coral Marie Molina

Thank you^

Tink Rabey-Hall

www.pinterest.com/CampWightman and www.pinterest.com/tinkrh/ -- Enjoy!

Mike Moose Greenfield

<https://www.pinterest.com/widjimoose/>

Travis Allison

There is also a Pinterest board that many of our members contribute to:
<https://www.pinterest.com/zoic/best-of-summer-camp-ideas/> (DM me your Pinterest account if you'd like to be a contributor)

Coleman Weibley

Bailey Blake

Mercersburg Summer Programs is looking to round out its summer staff by hiring the following specialist positions: PHOTOGRAPHER, SUPPORT/ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER, ASSISTANT PADDLING INSTRUCTOR, CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR and ASSISTANT CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR. Feel free to contact me for more information!

Hey everyone! Right now on twitter come on over to #campchat to spend an hour answering q's and explaining why parents should #choosecamp!

Good afternoon all you hard working camp folk! I'm looking to add a camper behavior/expectation contract to our pre camp packets. One that parents can go over with their campers and sign before attending camp. Ideas and examples are welcome :)

I am working off of one that camp used years ago, but it's very robotic and almost terrifying to read. Just looking for ideas so I don't scare campers away from attending :)

Jerrod Henoch

I uploaded our 2012 one to the files section as an example because I had it handy on this PC.

Marit Rannei Olsen

Thanks Jerrod!

Jody Rutten

I can send one to you if you would like.

Marit Rannei Olsen

Jody, that would be wonderful :)

Jody Rutten

I posted it under the files section.

Our Code of Conduct

We posted another new "specialty" "theme" "day" camp for today.

Serious question that might sound like a rant seeing as it's something I'm passionate about: Nature! I've noticed Nature appreciation and exploration and education terribly lacking in a lot of camps. My second summer camp (a Ycamp) only offered a "Fishing" director/specialist/instructor in Nature related activities... I had to write a proposal for a "Nature" specialist position to be created. (It was created and successful but I think has been dropped again since no one really took an interest in running it) It's very very rare for me to find a camp that has a person/program/position designated for Nature. So what's the deal? Do any camps you know of have one? Is it that no one applies? Is it that kids aren't interested? Is it the first to go on the Financial chopping block for some reason? I'm really curious to know what the trends are outside of my experience. (I mean... getting out into Nature was the reason to start camping, right?) Edit: and I do mean "summer camp". Edit 2: and I get being "too scientific" turns kids off. So does that mean there's a lack of effective nature engagement and since there's a lack it's avoided?

Andrew Mish Hood

We have two geology counselors, expanded from one due to a geological society grant. We are also expanding into outdoor survival schools year round, and adding orienteering and nature discovery programs for the summer of 16. I agree that the nature angle has lost focus in search of the next piece of innovative programming, but with some focus and

creativity, nature activities can be the new thing as well as the old.

Joe Fortin

With our international clients, introduction to nature can be a delicate process. What I've had success in the past doing is setting up a spotting scope out by our marsh. I may get kids to stop or I may not. But when I do.... It normally starts with me asking, "hey, ya wanna see some cool?" If they say no I shrug my shoulders and continue on looking. If they yes, I show them whatever cool thing I'm looking at (typically ducks, sometime turtles, sometime something else). I find it's all about the soft sell.

Aly Brenner

As a former nature director I know that nature always seemed to be the program that campers were least interested in. I feel like this is due to nature being one of the less active activities and campers get bored at nature. The key is not to do stereotypical nature activities such as nature walks and to always do high energy activities that are constantly keeping camper engaged. Nature really all comes down to how the director perceives the program. I always made sure to be really, really enthusiastic about every activity. I would have loved to incorporate science based activities relating to nature but that's hard with limited supplies. One thing I did do that campers loved was building volcanoes. Fire building and shelter building is always a big hit too. It really all comes down to the type of nature program you have at your camp and how your director makes it work. Nature can be an awesome activity, but it is up to the nature director to come up with fun activities and show campers that nature is awesome.

Logan Wicketts

We (Camp Jorn) have an Environmental Ed program! The more excited the staff member is about being the director of Environment Ed the more excited the kids are! We've never had trouble hiring people since the program started in 2012... We also have other nature programs too such as canoeing, outdoor biking, none of our classes are inside even our crafts is basically outside!

Curt Jackson

I think it's hard to find someone passionate about teaching nature. At least that is what I have found. Camps I have worked at usually had a nature activity but finding someone to take that position was tough, if not impossible.

We all love being outdoors. We all love nature. But when it came to teaching about trees, plants, animals, erosion, etc. people find it hard to make it enjoyable enough to hold the campers' interest.

When I worked outdoor ed we had a lot of games and activities that were nature related, but the kids were there to learn with their school and they were in that mindset. Trying to do those same activities at summer camp can be difficult.

I think having the kids out in nature for a week or more is what camp strives to provide. It gives them an appreciation for what is beyond city life. I do agree that diving deeper into the subject of nature is important and it's a niche that can use some quality programming that kids will respond to.

I would challenge you to create curriculum that engages summer campers to learn more about nature. If it has the three Es (entertainment, empowerment and education) then it is something that could be a game changer with camps.

Joel Van Egbert

Here in Colorado, I can say most camps have OE or EE programs.

Anne Deane Berman

Our campers are completely off technology until it makes sense to use it for a project (compose, make a movie, photography, etc) until the end of camp. We don't have a nature staff per se, but each day we take the whole camp to different beaches and on quests in redwood forests. Our environment is part of our camp story. www.campdemigod.org

Curt Jackson

Anne, I love your camps. Having run my own Camp Half-Blood and Camp Jupiter I can appreciate what you do and the lengths you go for an awesome camp experience. That's all based on your website, of course.

Vicky Wallace

I feel that our staff are often worried that they don't know enough science of actual facts about nature to feel comfortable in the role. Campers don't mind if you cannot name something specific...they love it when you look it up for them and then learn it together. There are many great App's that cut down the weight of the old field guides too. My experience tells me the campers are more into the finding and exploring rather than the scientific explanations!

Joe Fortin

I once took a group of students from Toronto into the woods. Instead of getting hung up on the names of things we focused on what was the same and what was different. I scribed notes as the students made their observations. In the end they had made their own little key to id'ing the ten or so "real" trees along the trail.

Anne Deane Berman

I should also say that we have 2 biology majors on staff, so there is a lot of room for conversation. So "slipping" it in through relationships with science (and arts) faculty and college age counselors has been successful.

Sarah Erickson

We have a nature specialist. Our kids come for a week at a time and all of them get 2 nature/garden sessions, just like they get 2 sessions at the craft cabin. It's an essential part of the camp experience for us.

Amy Moore- Kelly

Girl Scouts of northeastern New York hires nature specialists. They go nature hiking, fishing, birding, creek walking and more. So vital to us and our programs!

Laura Edwards

This is our first year and we have a Wildlife and Conservation talk followed by a Wildlife walk on our itinerary. We'll also be working with the national trust to create dormouse houses for in the Forrest. Nature, Wildlife and Conservation is extremely important in what we do.

Philip Coulling

Our camp has specialized in nature study and field-based experiential learning for nearly 75 years. Our schedule is built around daily classes in such subjects as botany, ecology, geology, and ornithology. We do have the advantage that most of our staff are former campers and thus are familiar with our program, but I agree with what others have noted: that expertise is less important than passion and a pedagogical approach that facilitates self-discovery. We actually expect our campers to do follow-up projects for each class, and

while our camp is certainly not for everyone, we have a high rate of return and demand exceeds capacity. My point is not to toot our own horn, but simply to assert that campers will embrace the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature if the program engages their natural curiosity and creativity.

Jenn Macios

We also hire nature specialists. Our nature specialist has some set programs they work through every year but we allow every new program specialist to bring some of their own programs along with adding their flavor to our already established programs.

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

We are a YMCA day camp- had a nature program for awhile and cut it. Last summer we started a partnership with a local science and nature education team and they will be back this year. Kids did not like it years ago when we had it, but the new program we had was a lot more enjoyable for the kids. Still a work in progress! I think at our camp the hope is that counselors will step up and do education on it as well.

Morgan Tebeau

Hannah I make it a point to incorporate nature education in my programs. One of our program areas is environmental literacy. I just got back from Tri-State and was super excited to see the Nature Kit there as a vendor. Great stuff

Timothy Daniel Reidy

Hannah, We have been a environmental education day camp for 22 years and I can vouch, kids love it. We do 4 types of activities for ee: educational hikes, live animal encounters (with our injured, non-releasable animals at our nature center, and science exploration activities (using content from our tradition, project wild, project wet, etc). We hire 100% of counselors to led these activities. Feel free to reach out if you have questions, t.reidy@chattnaturecenter.org. <http://chattnaturecenter.org/camp-kingfisher/>

Hannah Hudson

Thanks for all the feedback! Like many of you said, it really DOES matter who is delivering the program. A curriculum can be out of this world but if the presenter doesn't inspire a sense of wonder and excitement, it gets passed over.

So, I'm curious about something else. I figure a lot of you didnt mention what camp you work for since we're all here to learn and not necessarily 'promote' our camps, but I'd like to know! Half of my 10 year experience is at Ycamps, and that is where I saw a lack of Nature Programing (except where I was allowed to create my own position) so I'm wondering a few things about camps that DO have a Nature component. Are they private/long running/in-the-family camps? Affiliated with a group (4-H, Girl Scouts, Y/JCCs?) What part of the country do they serve? What demographics make up the majority of campers? If anyone would be willing to share more details I'm all ears!

Jody Rutten

Look for someone with Outdoor Ed experience.

Morgan Tebeau

Hannah I previously worked for AMC's Mountain Classroom program in NH (heavy in environmental & nature programs), I also worked for a non-profit in VA, Sheridan Mountain Campus with a strong place-based ecology & environmental literacy program, now I work for a for profit camp also in VA, Camp Horizons with nature and farm/garden programs. Part of My background is in designing and developing environmental & nature based curriculum for camps.

James Lortie

We combined our nature program with science. Science is the EXPLANATION of nature, and Nature is the EXPLORATION. Often, the two go hand in hand. All you need is someone creative

We're looking into purchasing walkie talkies/radios for our camp staff to carry with them. What brands has anyone found to be reliable, have decent range, and be cost effective? This will be our first time having camp staff carry radios, what helpful hints does anyone have?

Joe DeBiso

We use Titan TR-200 and have been very happy with them.

Laura Fuese Hall

This seems to depend A lot on the terrain at your camp. We have a mostly flat and wooden camp and the motorolas that you can pick up at BJ's or Amazon are great for us. Since one or two end up in the river each summer, we have not invested much in our radios. I hope that is helpful. Maybe pick up a few and test them out before the season, if that is an option for you.

Casey Sukeforth

If you use the search feature of this group, you will find this is a very common question asked and lots of people have great insight! Good luck

Drew Siegersma

As for helpful hints; begin with explaining your expectations for how they should be handled and the proper etiquette. Make sure the staff know who is allowed to use them, what to use them for, and what not to say over them (such as foul language, personal information, etc). Also consider creating codes that can be used when something happens, but you don't want everybody near a radio to hear it (the early stages of a missing camper, emergency, etc).

Lori Rosene

If you are in a location where you might have reception problems contact a local provider...like Motorola...they will come out to your site and make recommendations.

Sender Engel

If you go with business grade, discount two way radios.com has the RCA XR150 for a good price. They are good, small, reasonably priced and the company has great customer service. We have 50 of them in our camp.

Sender Engel

That's dtwr.com

Lisa Northey-Greer

Vertex

Looking for feedback on a new program we're offering for teens.

Carly Robinson

Athens, GA has this program!

William Everett Brown

Craft beer making and beard maintenance?

Harrison Gabe

Can adults register for this?

Robert Lawton

If it requires maintenance, it's not a beard - it's whiskers. Just sayin'.

Owen Langbart

That is awesome! Will there be activities on proper wearing of skinny jeans?

Anyone on natter?

Next big thing?

ello never really took off; am wondering if this will be the same... (Always trying to nail new social media networks to avoid the "yik yak surprise" issues.)

Al Ferreira Stephanie Huber Williams

David Seddon

Was it pure coincidence that your first two lines had only 3 words? I don't think it'll stay relevant for long. Then again, will anything anymore, worth understanding as much as you can and engage when beneficial. 3 words will never be enough to describe my food, so it's not for me. #jokebutserious

Dave Hennessey

Ha ha, no coincidence. ;)

I am looking for an online HR forms tracking system to use with incoming Summer Staff. Ideally for the low low cost of \$0.

It would give staff the ability to complete HR forms online, and track who is at which point of the process.

Does anyone have recommendations for that?

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

ADP?

David Allen-Hughes

Docusign can be set up for this...but I would look to zenpayroll.com

Herb Toplan

Pay for security. Don't risk personnel information for a free program.

Jennifer H. Selke

I have to second what David Allen-Hughes said about Zen payroll. I met with Josh Reeves, the CEO at Zen Payroll and it seems like a great company.

Chris Brayton-Tedesco

Also, we use Paycom. I like ADP better, but Paycom has been working well so far.

I'm in the middle of designing summer camp t-shirts for a few camps. I really like to keep the shirts trendy, something the counselors will love to wear all summer. Anyone have any awesome design ideas to pass on? Thanks!

Kate Taylor

The mode-du-jour is vintage/rustic logos. Try Pinterest, I got some GREAT inspiration for mine from there! (Just try searching "vintage logo" or some such)

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

Tie die !

Kelly Wilson

Last summer I made our tshirt design using a word cloud. A word cloud is when take a shape outline (we used the outline of a jumping kid) and fill it with words that describe your camp. There are websites where you can enter your words and shape outline and the site creates the design for you. Very fun and unique to your camp design.

Pip Nightingale

We did white logo print on white tshirt. When tie died the white logo pops out against colourful backdrop. They sold faster than any other tshirt, ever.

Amy Edith

Pip Nightingale very cool!

Molly Modrzynski

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Andrew Lalley

Suns out, guns out

Logan Wicketts

I'm a director and we all wear the same uniform and I would die for tie dye t-shirts lol!

Jim Hooper

This is our design for 2015....

James Goodger

Life is Better at the Lake

Drew Siegersma

Find an existing design from another company that is relevant to the camp. (An outdoor based camp used northface.) Emulate the design, tailored to the camp. Before printing make sure you cover yourself with copyright- either get the rights or make sure it falls into fair-use somehow.

Anna Mendis Smith

Life is better at the lake! :).

Jalisa Danhof

I just did this one today! :) White Ink - Campers dye their own.

Jody Rutten

We are located in Ohio and did the state outline with our name. It has been a hot seller with our 6th graders during outdoor ed season.

Any suggestions of where to buy knee boards for camp? We are looking to replace two and not sure best websites, etc.

David Berlin

sounds like someone kneeds boards

Dan Baer

Jonah Wagan??

Michael Landry

Overton's

Jonah Wagan

Overtons or Bart's

I had a staff application today and the applicants date of birth was October 15, 2015. I suggested we meet at the next ultrasound. #attentiontodetail

Jessie Kreider

I had an applicant years ago write his Last name in both the first and last name slot. Thus became a knickname that he has not lived down to this day.

James Lortie

I get applicants all the time who put their address like this:

1234 Street Name

And that's it! No city, postal, nothing.

James Lortie

But the WORST is when they've applied to a few camps and send you an app with the other camps name all over it

Dan Lichtenstein

I think this is a case where the applicant is trying to hide his age. I've seen this, where someone feels that their age is a red flag. I had this a week or so ago, and then the applicant refused to do the interview via skype, only phone. I wished him good luck.

Presadium put on a great sex abuse prevention training a few years ago at the ACA national conference in Dallas. One of the big red flags they pointed to are gaps and other false basic info on the application.

edit: meant to say this "could" be a case where the applicant is trying to hide their age. May be an honest mistake, but I have had applicants dishonest about their age.

Hollie Penuel

FYI - In the US, you cannot legally ask for date of birth on applications. You can ask questions like, "Will you be at least 18 years old by the time staff training begins?"

Dan Lichtenstein

Hollie, that's not accurate. You can ask for date of birth, but you cannot base a hiring decision on that.

Lee Carpenter

It's probably just a mistake - they get used to writing this year all the time and just continued.

Matthew Greene

Can you ask whether or not they have a pulse? Sorry, couldn't resist

Jessie Kreider

Date of birth is used on background checks. If you are worried about it, only include DOB request on the background authorization paperwork

Lee Carpenter

That said, I am an attorney and camp professional. Your best bet in these situations is to leave off the date of birth question on your application, and just do what Hollie Penuel said. I take it a step further and have multiple check boxes for 16, 18, 21, and 25, which indicate the different age requirements we have for different positions. Make sure that your hiring decision is contingent on a clean background check (our contract says that if the camp director receives any information that would make the hire unfit for the position, the contract can be rescinded.) You will obtain all kinds of personal information as part of the background check (DOB, SSN, etc.), and you go from there. I don't like having that personal information on file for non-hires because it's information that could be used to steal identities, and opens up liability that we don't need.

Rachel Silverberg Chadwin

He stars in the back to the future camp edition!

Dan Lichtenstein

There are things here that vary state by state. Some states do not allow you to run a background check until after you offer the candidate a job. Further, if someone's background check comes back with certain types of criminal convictions, that is grounds to terminate the contract. Of course, if you are in an at-will state, you can terminate the contract for any reason.

Hollie Penuel

Just some light reading on the ADEA of 1967 :)

In all seriousness, this website spells out federal discrimination laws in a pretty straight forward manner.

<http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/age.cfm>

James Lortie

DOB can be a risky thing to keep on file. We just ask what age they'll be by the Dec 31st of this year. That's all we need to know, unless they divulge DOB on their own

Patti Sampson

aww, I feel for the kid I wrote a receipt the other day dated March 17, 2017 you're right attention to detail is important but we all make mistakes :)

Iguanas Campamentos

Interesting topic!!! you can learn so much from these discussions!! weve never had an issue with DOB in Venezuela or Latin American camps. We actually use age as part of our hiring criteria, nevertheless, the approach mentioned by Hollie Penuel, Lee Carpenter and James Lortie fits great both with our principles and our needs. Cheers!

I am looking to replace my overhead projector. Any suggestions on brands or good deals?

Curt Jackson

Do they still make those? I haven't seen an "overhead" projector in years. Good for you for staying old school. Personally, I always check Amazon for things like this and base my purchases on the reviews. I just looked on there and, sure enough, they have a bunch. Who knew?

Charon Cricket Snearing

If you don't need to project a whole page at a time and want to just do smaller originals, Michael's arts and crafts has a great item called a Tracer...when you have a 40 or 50% off coupon it's a great bargain! Works with a light bulb. Great for projecting things for murals or scenery, etc.

Carly Robinson

Where are you? I have a few in storage?

Jennifer T. Geary

Depending on what other equipment you have this might make sense:
<http://www.elmousa.com>

Hello #CampPros YMCA Camp Tockwogh is in need of a few staff spots due to recent back-outs. We are in need of 3 Leadership Positions: 1. Office Assistant 2. Ropes Course Assistant Director 3. Wellness Center Assistant and one cabin counselor to work in our Equestrian Program. We are located in Worton MD on the gorgeous Chesapeake Bay! Feel free to reach out via email to cizett@ymcade.org or check us out on the web www.ymcacamptockwogh.org

Curt Jackson

This is a great camp. I worked there as the Iroq Village Chief in the summer of 2000. Nice property, great people, Y camp, tons of activities...what more could you want?

Here's a more focused group for religion-based camp professionals. Please join so we can get it going! It doesn't hurt to be in two groups! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/234682040026147/>

Attention girls' side and boys' side!!!

We are proud to present, Summer 365 Camper of the Week, Doug Herzog! He is the head of the Viacom Music and Entertainment Group, which includes some of our favorite networks such as MTV, VH1, and Comedy Central. He is a TV biz vet who counts among his many accolades the experiences he had at camp. It's a place where he credits learning his leadership skills and everything he needed to know in life! So, it is only fitting that he share his amazing camp experience through what he knows best video!

Check out this very special edition of Camper of the Week powered by It's A Camp Thing!!!
#S365COTW #IACT hosted by Nicole Ryan

I am looking for some new ideas for mobile team building to cater to a high school demographic in both rural and urban areas. What is your go to build up and initiatives?

Dave Hennessey

Michael Landry

Marit Rannei Olsen as requested....

Hey folks! YMCA Wanakita Family Camp is still looking for a few staff this summer Specifically, I'm looking for someone for the Adventure Specialist position. This includes running some of the following: high & low ropes, sports, archery, some mountain biking and nature programs. Please pass anyone you know of, my way!
sarah_bell@ymca.ca

Thanks!

Sarah Bell

Also looking for Waterfront and Adventure Specialists! Thanks!

Cheryl Suydam-Taylor

Where are you located?

Hannah Hudson

^what she said.

Sarah Bell

Oops! Sorry about that. I just assume the camping world is so small that I'm always in a community from my area! haha We're in Haliburton, Ontario

Hi, has anyone had success in posting jobs in PostJobsNow? What other advertising sites have you had success with? Thanks!

Laura Fuese Hall

The Aca jobs listing was fruitful for us. Good luck!

Camps that don't offer "hosted" rentals, do you let your rental groups use activities like archery when they are renting your facility if you don't have your own staff on site? We don't provide staff for our rentals, (like renting a cottage) groups come and use the facility on their own. Thoughts?

Mike Moose Greenfield

I limit the activities groups can do on their own. Climbing wall, ropes, waterfront and archery all require staff supervision.

Ben Smoky Radley

We have certain activities that are self led, where we put out or make available the equipment. Canoes & Mountain Bikes. Archery, rock wall, etc. require a camp facilitator for us.

Andrea Kelly

Yes. They need to provide proof of certification to lead the activities and some areas are charged a usage fee.

Chris Peterson

You should do a simple risk analysis of your activities. That should give you a pretty clear outline of what you can have your groups self lead and what needs proper supervision. At our camp we just let them use the grounds (sports fields, playgrounds, gaga pits, etc.). We also require each group to have their own insurance in case of any issue that may happen. Most groups don't put up a stink about it.

Grego Dow

Thanks all...I was re-evaluating our rental package (and what we offer rental groups) and have made some changes based on input here.

Chris Kaake

We don't allow them to use anything that requires certified supervision without paying a fee to have our staff on site.

Travis Allison

There is a case before the courts in Alaska right now that might have some impact on this. I believe the rental group used some camp equipment that wasn't explicitly addressed in the contract and someone was very badly hurt.

Grego Dow

Oh thanks for the info Travis Allison. I'll have to look into that.

Chris Retz

We do not allow groups to use the activities unless they pay for one of our staff to be there and pay for the use of the activity

Curt Jackson

I'll let groups play ping pong. I might even let them hike on the trails.

Amanda LeRoy

If any groups on our site want structured activities (boating, ropes, etc.) they must hire one of our instructors. Groups are permitted to use hiking trails, pool, tennis courts, etc without an instructor.

Grego Dow

Amanda LeRoy, do they have to provide their own lifeguards for your pool? If so do they provide proof of certification to you?

Maggie Braun

One way to look at this is those activities as outlined in ACA Accreditation that require specialized equipment, heat source, certified instructors, etc could be determined not usable by rental groups unless they hire our instructors. These are deemed activities that pose risk to participants and the camp.

Grego Dow

Good point Maggie Braun. Thanks!

Amanda LeRoy

We've got an indemnity form that rental groups need to sign which basically says that they're required to have a responsible adult supervise children under 14. We provide pool supervision for our school groups (the majority of our campers) and school holiday programs. A community group - like a karate club, or a group renting our self-catered units swims at their own risk. We don't require that the responsible adult have a lifeguard certification. There is information at the pool about how to contact staff in an emergency, though.

Amanda Grassick

Ask your insurance co what would be covered in your policy and what type of coverage the rental group would need for each activity you are considering.

Grego Dow

Our Insurance co. has had no issue with the way we've handled rental groups, but I have had some reservations and have now changed what is available when not hosted. Thanks everyone.

This.

Blake Sunshine Leiber

One big thing not mentioned in this article but Facebook spoke a ton about at F8 is the growth of internet.org. I wrote a little bit about how it could impact camps:
<http://socialsummercamp.com/spreading-the-word-of-summer-camp-all-over-the-world/>

Travis Allison

and it was a great article Blake.

Amanda Dotson

Can I just say, I love how supportive this community is on everything! From questions and guidance, to article reviews! It just makes me love camp even more!

Curt Jackson

I can't wait for the consumer version of the Oculus Rift.

Hello Camp Pros: Does anyone have a written document that helps parents decide if your camp is the right one for their child with disabilities/ on the Autism Spectrum?

I'd like to have a list of questions to post in our parent info tab on the website but I'd like some help. This is what we have so far.

Camp Warner Park would like to help children with disabilities be more successful at camp. Please help us get to know your child better by answering the following questions.

- 1- Does your child have an IEP at school?
- 2- Does your child have a one on one aid?
- 3- What size group is most comfortable for your child?
- 4- How does your child handle transitions? Are they able to 'go with the flow'?
- 5- What situations are most stressful for your child?
- 6- How does your child act when they are in a stressful situation?
- 7- What age are the majority of your child's friends?
- 8- When is your child happiest?

How would you modify this list? THANK YOU for your input!

-Adrienne from Camp Warner Park

Tyler Igou

Yo Adrienne!

Jessie Kreider

I sometimes ask about sensory issues. Maybe if it's noise, they are on the outside row at a campfire to lessen the over stimulation. You can ask about diet and if they eat a varied diet. A child that only eats chicken strips every day may have a hard time at camp if this has not been addressed. (This is different then just a picky eater). One positive I've had with some kids with autism is giving them a schedule so things are not a suprise to them and at the same time they are able to be a leader in the group and help the others in their cabin arrive to activities on time.

Melissa Bogert

Following from florida!

Matt Henry

We also ask about the levels of independence/dependence in activities of daily living (eating, dressing, showering, toileting).

Carrie Kishline Lawson

PM me your email and I will send you the assessment form we use to screen kids for our autism program. It is probably more extensive than you need but will give you a good idea of which questions to ask. Ours was developed with help from the Seattle Children's Autism Center staff.

Wendy Johnson

You might want to ask about triggers such as bugs ect..

Adrienne Sipkovsky

Thanks so much!

Amanda Grassick

If your camp doesn't specialize in spectrum disorders it would be worthwhile listing the kind of support you can offer as well. If guardians don't know what you can offer they might not tell you the whole story to get their kid into camp. Being upfront about your capacity will help guardians understand that you are asking the questions so you can support their kid and not so you can exclude them.

<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/campfire>

Anyone in the Mid-West selling a Voyageur Canoe?

Preparing for how you're going to approach the idea of sending kids home for disciplinary reasons starts now. Last summer, we managed to send zero home for disciplinary reasons - here's an article I wrote for Go Camp Pro on how we curtailed sending kids home, and how, when we do need to send them home, we'll send them home feeling loved:

<https://www.gocamp.pro/sending-fewer-kids-home-and-sending-those-who-cant-stay-home-with-love/>

James Davis

I should mention! Posting our take on this was inspired by a session I saw at TriState by Dan Weir and Scott Arizala. Smart fellas :)

Hannah Hudson

I'm all for retaining as many campers as possible, but there has to be some reasonableness. I worked at a camp one summer where it was practically impossible to send even violent kids home (because of policy or who paid for the kid to come), and it caused a lot of trouble. Upper admin staff-directors- were so tied up 1 on 1 (more like 2 to 1 for safety reasons) their own duties fell through and then disfunction trickled down to staff depending on them for support and direction. A lot of frustration. And there were kids who 'couldn't' be sent home because they weren't "violent" but were essentially "bullies", inciting fights between other campers but playing innocent and never getting 'caught'. (You needed to have a stack of evidence against someone, even staff, before they could be sent home)

I liked your article a lot, but any advice on what to do if you find your hands tied by YOUR superiors/the organization?

James Davis

Hey there!

Thank you so much for the thoughtful and passionate feedback!

My initial thoughts are: if your organization or superiors tie your hands as to when kids have to (or may) go home, then focusing on preventing those situations from arising becomes even more paramount. Staffing camp in such a way that no camper is ever unsupervised, etc.

As for the bullying concern - persistent bullying actually IS a reason I'd send someone home. In that instance, I'd start by bringing the camper in for a conversation with parents. I'd explain that refraining from bullying is one of the very few restrictions we have at camp. I'd outline what bullying means to me. I'd get parent & child to agree that further instances of bullying would mean a temporary removal from the community (until next summer), and then I'd follow through on it.

But there are steps well in advance of that conversation that make a big difference - it's why we don't even allow the smallest examples of sarcasm/teasing/derogatory nicknames, etc. "We were just messing around" turns into bullying all too quickly - but it rarely gets to that point if intervention happens right away.

Hope this helps! I know sending kids home is super hard and emotional.

Dan Weir

Thanks James Davis! Scott Arizala and I loved leading this session. You can find the notes here: <http://danweir.squarespace.com/blog/2015/3/18/throwing-in-the-towel-saying-come-get-your-kid-2015-tri-stat.html>

James Davis

I linked over to them in the article I think as well. Thanks, Dan!

I'm looking to build some contacts with camp professionals near Harrisonburg VA. I am a student at JMU looking to direct a residential camp after grad school (which will probably be in Georgia, so I'd love to meet some southern contacts as well!)

As part of my graduation requirements I'll need to work in a type of mentee position during spring semester 2016.

Chills. Imagine having your camp brilliantly dramatized Broadway style by a most insightful writer/composer complemented by a gifted performer...

Stephanie Ruby Compton

This is so very cool. Thanks for sharing.

Ephraim Shapiro

NP. Too good not to!

Is anyone offering a lifeguard training course somewhere in the Northeast in early or mid-June? I have a couple trainable lifeguards I'd love to send! Thanks!

We are looking for an Assistant Camp Director to bring the "WOW" to JCC Camp By The Sea...

<http://jobview.monster.com/Assistant-Camp-Director-Director-of-Youth-Family-Services-Job-Margate-City-NJ-US-148286837.aspx?mescoId=&jobPosition;=1>

Any great examples of annual reports?

Any one here ever use Adventure Mas based out of Texas and Connecticut for a ropes course inspection?

Kris Ebner Martin

Nope, sorry. We use Arboreal Edge out of Warren, CT.

Camp Karen

Thanks.

Tink Rabey-Hall

Found this list of clients on their website (though the website seems to have some old info -- 2011) :
<http://adventuremas.com/site/wp-content/downloads/PDF/AdventureMasClientsFlier11.pdf>
Looks like most of their work has been in TX, not CT. I was interested as I am in CT and

have never heard of them.

Ange Atkinson

If you are in Texas or want to go with a TX company - go with Rope Works Inc., second choice would be Adventure Experience

Camp Karen

Thanks. We are in Connecticut.

There you go, Travis :)!

S&S;, coupon code C4103 for 20% off and free shipping

Jessy Glair

Thanks!

Benjamin Esposito

I did better through their bid process.

Getting 11 more people to join us could be one of the coolest birthday presents ever.

Travis Allison

and, DONE.

Curt Jackson

Party!!!! What do we all win, Travis?

Beth Allison

Happy Birthday, one day early, Travis!

Rebecca Jess

THIRTY-OOOOOOONNNNNNNNEEEE!

Colin Penman

Happiest of birthdays! What a great present!

A.j. Richard

Thanks for adding me, Hanna A. Krogmann!

This was our best Facebook post ever. Notice there were more comments on the shared posts than on our page. That was Moms sharing the post, and then them and Moms talking about it.

Kim Summers-Everett

Thank you for sharing your success!

Gary Forster

George, you're a genius!

George DeTellis Jr.

No, I read every article on Gary Forster's website first. The #1 reason kids come to camp is: friends, making friends. Why do they come back? Their friends are there. Who do Mom's listen to? Their friends.

Robert Lawton

Never underestimate the power of a good photograph.

Emily Kienker

Kevin Cartee

George DeTellis Jr.

More about this post: After it was so successful, I pinned it to the top of our Facebook page for a couple weeks. Then I unpinned it, and posted a second version with improved text 10 days ago. This second post generated more activity. We are racing to our April 1st deadline and our online registration is busy.

Elise Bates Russell

Tom Paradise

Dick Thomas

Thanks for sharing!

George DeTellis Jr.

Tom Meloche

Can anyone tell me the ACA required ratio of lifeguards to swimmers in a junior Olympic sized pool and in a lake?

Angela E. Arneal

ACA doesn't have a specified amount. All ACA requires is that you have a policy in line and that you follow it. Our Girl Scout policy is 1:25 with 1:10 ratio for pool watchers.

Lori Rosene

Check your state regulations.

Julie Laffey Szerenyi

Our pools is 1:6

Ange Atkinson

ACA recommends your policy follow 'industry standards', which means following American Red Cross standards or some other certifying body and AR recommends 1:25, so technically that's what you should go with for best practice.

Colin Stewart

Your state will be the guide on that. Not ACA.

Ange Atkinson

Plus you need lookouts

Cori Jacobs Welbes

... and your risk tolerance!

Julie Laffey Szerenyi

Lifeguard 1:25 counselors with campers 1:6 at the pool

Christopher Colahan

Our county sets our required ratios for supervising waterfronts...1 lifeguard per 25 swimmers AND 1 counselor per 10 swimmers to supervise when the swimmers are out of the water

Courtney Jewell Abernathy

Our camp, 1:12, but, we require 2 minimum at all waterfront activities.

Dave Hennessey

ACA requires two lifeguards at the waterfront or at the pool...

Robert Lawton

For comparison, here's the BSA's guide:
<http://www.scouting.org/Home/OutdoorProgram/Aquatics/safe-swim.aspx>

Kristen Parkin

We always did 1-10 in lake and 1-25 in pool not counting instructors and counselors in water or on deck or land

Morgan Tebeau

Thanks for the response and resources everyone!! I am new to managing a pool and a lake!

Suggestions please! Looking for a free program that is quick and effective to watermark photos. Jet Photo Studio keeps crashing on me!

Anyone ever get Tuber'z for their camp store? Did they sell well?

<http://www.insaneproducts.com/products/tuberz.html>

Mike Moose Greenfield

We did them for a Survivor theme and are selling the rest in the Tuck Shop

Alicia DeHart Theriault

Our uniform outfitter has a similar (if not the same) product. We haven't included them in our uniform options, but the owner raves about them. He also works with collegiate gear and says they are hugely popular with the college crowd, which likely translates to being popular with the counselor crowd as well.

Misty Dawn Shay-Rivera

I think if you give one to your counselors as a welcome gift... And you can get them on board with wearing them... It'll be like free advertisement... Your campers will want to wear them too...

Curt Jackson

We get ours from Tan's Club. They are a soft polyester and very comfortable. The staff and campers all get one each week so we buy a lot of them. We get the solid color ones. Depending on what color team you are on that's what color tubular bandana you get. The best part is that they are as low as \$1.00 each plus shipping.
<http://www.tansclub.com/socotubadop.html>

Lisa Allen

Yes we bought Tuber'z. They are very similiary quality to Buffs but way cheaper. Our counselors love them.

Guy Bourassa

We had our own design produced by our promo item supplier. They sell like hot buns!

Jen Clinton-Shc

Kathy Ann Joseph a new item for the Shirt Shack perhaps?

Ben Smoky Radley

They have sold very well for us as well. The big difference between them and a buff is that the buff is longer. The only impact this has is that with a shorter variation, so some of the configurations you are supposed to be able to wear it in don't work. Not a big deal for us.

Brigid Walsh

Does anyone have a good source for buffs? I think we'd like to go with the longer version, but I've only found them for above our budget (or with a minimum order of 500).

Jocelyn Lewis Van Hende

Kirsten Verity

Great quote for staff training.

Our camp/recreation department is desperately trying to find walkie talkies that actually work well and will last more than a few years. What walkie talkies does everyone else use?

Travis Allison

Hi Tara. There's been lots of great discussions about walkie talkies previously. If you use the search box (Top of the right-hand column) you'll likely find the answers there!

James Lortie

http://www.amazon.com/gp/aw/d/B00ECW9DB4/ref=mp_s_a_1_18?qid=1427391308&sr;=8-18π=AC_SX110_SY1

These are what we have - going into our 3rd summer with them. They have strong waist clips, and good reception. Works beautifully. No signs of rain being an issue yet.

Downsides: they announce the channel as your change it. Like REALLY LOUDLY. So if you ever need to change channels secretly for any reason, you have to turn the volume down.

They're so powerful, passing transport trucks (if you're within the 2 miles of a highway) can interfere.

Melissa Freehill

We use radio boss, they are on the expensive side but go long range and are pretty tough. We also purchased some waterproof walkies

Derek Bergman

This is what we have been using. We like that you can program each with its own name and call just that person. http://www.amazon.com/Uniden-Submersible-Two-Way-Radios-Charging/dp/B008F571CU/ref=pd_bxgy_e_img_y

Kevin Murphy

We have the same ones that James uses. The BaoFeng ones work well and they are low cost. I recommend them.

Jerrold Henoch

Emily - please follow/look into

Seth Houser

do you need a license for the baofang? Is it just order and use?

Hillary Danielle

I will totally put that on my list Dave!

Hillary Danielle

Also please notice the speaker piece....that might be necessary haha Dave Jessica

Hillary Danielle

Dave, I now have that thanks to Chris

Seth Houser

Baofang users, how is the battery life?

James Lortie

Seth, this varied for us. If it dropped in water it went all crazy. Out of the 10 we got in 2013, about 7 are still functional and 3 are needing replacement.

James Lortie

It also depends on if your staff take care of them and know how to (charge only when dead), charge fully, etc. I teach my Walkie staff every year how to charge properly

Chris Retz

We use the MagOne BPR40 by motorola. They can be programmed to most channels of more inexpensive units so the radios you have now that still work can also be used

Michael Garcia Ymca

I have a 78 acre camp and use these. last 3 to 5 seasons. can be programmed with others. http://www.amazon.com/Cobra-Walkie-Talkie-microTalk-CXR925-22-Channel/dp/B0035PMH1W/ref=lm_ni_t?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER

Dave Hennessey

James Lortie, did you have to get a ham radio license and re-program your radios? Otherwise, it seems illegal to use those baofengs... Hillary

Dave Hennessey

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001UE6MJ8/ref=oh_aui_detailpage_o05_s01?ie=UTF8&psc;=1

Decent quality. Usually make it through the full summer. \$50/pair

Paul Schoen

We have an FCC frequency and I can program our radios myself I go to eBay and get the tm-810 small and great only \$40 with shipping

George DeTellis Jr.

radioboss.com - We bought these last summer. Very happy

Tim Chatfield

We are using radioboss also with great success - they are nice and light to carry around as well

Nathan Payne

Josh Grantham

Joe Hauser

We have a business radio license from the FCC, and we use Kenwood TK-3160s and the newer TK-3360s. The oldest ones are at 11 summers now and we've only replaced one or two over that time. We also have a repeater which boosts the signal range.

It was a bit of an investment but save for minor repairs (new antennas or belt clips) they've been doing great, and are very powerful. I think we've changed each battery only once over the years, some twice depending on amount of use.

Have any of you seen the show on Hulu.com called Behind the Mask? It follows 4 people who are mascots (high school, college, minors and pro). Season 2 has an autistic fellow who is a "freelance" mascot (working and volunteering at hospitals, schools, races, restaurants, etc.).

It is very interesting to see how having that kind of anonymity can bring out the fearless and fun side of people. Anyway, I am wondering if this is something that can be incorporated into a camp program for certain staff. Has anyone considered this - or even as part of a program for autistic campers.
<http://www.hulu.com/behind-the-mask>

Worth checking out!

For all those celebrating Passover or Easter this weekend I wish you the very best. Thought this may be of value or interest to those operating Jewish Camps or connected to Jewish Communities or those interested in Passover or a creative info/marketing tool.

<http://www.jewishcamp.org/camp-passover>

I just finished (actually it will always be evolving) a Camp Director Resource Page.

<http://summercampprogramdirector.com/camp-resource-page/>

Please take a look and email me if there are any resources you would like me to add. If it's a book send me the title and the author(s). If it's a video send me the link. If it's a company send me the name and their website. You can email me at curt@recreationpros.com.

I hope this page is beneficial to many of you. It took a while to create it, but I did it because it's something I wish I would have had years ago when I took my first camp leadership position.

Katherine Parnell

Thanks!

Joyce Oberthal

Can't wait to hunt through it :) Thanks

Kristen Parkin

Awesome

Jill Lawlor

Great!!

Hannah Hudson

That looks awesome!

Whitney Winston

Thanks for your hard work!!

Rachel Silverberg Chadwin

Very cool, thanks for putting this together. Such a great resource.

Curt Jackson

To serve and support a wonderful industry of professionals dedicated to changing the lives of youth and young adults is my pleasure.

Tink Rabey-Hall

Curt , just sent off an e-mail to you with a bunch of links and info I did not see posted on the page. I am hoping to make it into the not-yet-formed elite S'mores Contributor section! I'll shoot for 50+ additions to start. Thanks for all you do -- this is a great piece!

Kristen Parkin

Tink you rock too!

Tink Rabey-Hall

I was wondering...

Tink Rabey-Hall

Curt, just sent another before I break for dinner :). When you get back to updating/editing the page, let me know what number I'm at if you will...already have a few more in mind :).

Dawn Marie

Thank you!

Derek Bergman

Following so I can find this when I am in the office next.

Curt Jackson

I'll let you know, Tink. It'll be a couple of days before I make any more updates.

Hey Camp pros! I have some returning staff that are really causing me problems as a director but are good at their jobs and the kids really like them, so I am trying to figure out how I can work with them, but not have them sabotage the new staff. They are from a previous director that was very rigid almost military like and was fired/asked to leave because of these and other problems. I am the opposite, I like to run a camp where the kids are free to make choices as well as the staff. The kids in the past lined up for everything, it was like military camp, the kids and parents have said they like my style so much more, and our camp grew by 500 kids last summer. But I have had a hard time with several of the long term staff. They feel the schedule is too intense, we run a 13 week summer with training and 10 weeks of camp, we do have a lot of family weekend programs. But I don't have a lot of say over the schedule and have tried scheduling a day off before our weekend events, so that the staff have a day off before a long weekend event. The international staff we get are usually really good and it's the american staff I have more problems with. I am personally having a hard time with staff that think camp is a 9-5 job. We have a very small staff and don't have a big budget to have extra staff that only do one job. So a lot of times the program staff are also counselors at night. Any advice if you have been in this situation before. They are making a directors job harder than it already is.

Joyce Oberthal

If not hiring them back is not possible - or not a good idea - I suggest you try to enlist their assistance in helping the camp to develop into a wonderful place - appeal to their experience and ask them how they think they can contribute to what is happening in the camp

Victoria Hoppes

Hi Vanessa, feel free to PM me. I'd love to have a chat with you. I have worked through some of this in the last couple of years, too. I'd love to brainstorm and work through the situation with you.

Robert Lawton

So is the problem that some of the staff want military discipline, or is the problem that they feel the schedule is too intense?

Vanessa Grose

Both Robert. It's like the former staff liked the director yelling at them and making them feel like crap.

Chris Klingenberg

In the long run you will be better off without them. It hurts at first but you need to build your staff on what you need them to do.

Robert Lawton

You're a "good cop" - so hire a "bad cop" as your #2 and let him/her do the yelling (even a good scowl from time to time from your #2 might make those staff members happier).

As for working hours, that's an entirely different matter. Some people like facts, some people like feelings. So...

- For the facts people, do some research about similar camps and their working conditions. Show the grumblers that it's not just your camp.
- For the feelings people, acknowledge their hard work. Tell them you know they are going "above and beyond". Work to build team spirit where staffers can count on each other to pitch in when they've reached their limit. Just knowing they have a safety net can help reduce stress. Recognize their achievements and efforts every day. Tell them how much you appreciate them.

Chris Harmsen

I have to agree with Chris Klingenberg...also, feel free to PM if you wish...

Robert Lawton

Me, too. Grumblers who can't change their tune must go. They drag everyone else down and suck the fun out of summer.

Rosemary Pezzuto

Write your expectations in to their summer contracts--Make sure that everyone signs their letters of appointment and clearly understands what is expected and how things will be.

Janet Keilen

How about nights out once a week? Essentially though, they are either with you and support the camp as a whole, or they need to find other employment.

Janet Keilen

Not all on the same night.

Mike Smith

Do you give them expectations in your staff manual? Have a meeting with them before they meet the new staff to go over your expectations and have them sign a paper stating they fully understand and keep it in their file. That way you can have something to fall back on if something gets tough. Perhaps you could give them more of an incentive to work hard and give more recognition to those staff that do a good job, etc. Or you could not just have them back.

Beth Allison

We talked about these issues quite a lot on Camp Code podcasts. These ones in particular may be helpful for you:
<http://camphacker.tv/camp-code/2014/3/community-building-part-1-camp-code-3>
<http://camphacker.tv/camp-code/?offset=1394790780000> <http://camphacker.tv/camp-code/2014/2/12-thing-you-should-say-during-your-staff-training-camp-code-1>
<http://camphacker.tv/camp-code/2014/5/that-was-last-yearthis-is-this-year-camp-code-12>

Matt Buczek

I would have one on one talks pre summer explaining your goals and expectations.

If they are not supportive, I wouldn't hire them.

If they are not on board, they will spread.

When they move on they will have infected others and so on

Vanessa Grose

Yeah we are going to have a one on one with the two main players, your right the expectations need to be clear. I thought I was clear, but maybe adding them in the contract. Thanks everyone for your help and support. It's refreshing talking to those that understand the same fight.

Angela E. Arneal

Sometimes, I like when I have little to no returning staff. It only takes one bad egg... it takes one person to say that what is happening isn't "normal" and what they're being asked to do is "impossible" or "stupid." New staff have no expectations of last summer, you can mold them the way you want. I'd have a serious conversation with the old staff. Let them know that they're great at their job, but their job also includes supporting the camp. If they're not supporting the camp, they need to find a camp they can support.

Joyce Oberthal

It's also hard to know when it's time to encourage returning staff to leave the nest - especially if they have been there for a long time or might have even been campers - you have to look out for the overall well being of the camp and if these staff members don't contribute to that it is time for them to move on - there are other (many other) talented people who the campers will love just as much

Luke Bouma

Had this happen at a old camp I worked at in Maine. What we ended up doing was only having a few and I mean less than 3% of the best staff come back. Sounds harsh but some times when there is a big change it also needs to happen at the staff level before it can 100% take effect.

In the end it was tough the first year but after that it was like a new world.

Erica Jameson

Because I want the best for camp, not just for the kids, but the culture, the traditions, and the atmosphere, I would not hire them back. I would talk to them about my expectations of their behavior, and would then make a contract that says they agree to "x" type of behavior. If they can't agree to that, or don't follow their promises, I would let them go. I would also think really hard about how difficult it is to fire someone mid-summer. You're not there as a director only to make kids happy, you're there to make camp a place of community and continuity.

Grego Dow

Here's a great blog by Joe Richards that deals with this topic.
<http://www.yoyojoe.com/archives/no-drama-not-my-circus-not-my-monkeys-1015.html>

Beth Kuehn Ehlers

If they are so unhappy, why do they want to come back? Set them free to pursue a position that better suits their gifts.

Curt Jackson

Change can be hard, especially if you enjoyed the way things were and then someone comes in and does a complete 180 with the program. Leaving can be hard as well since there is a sense of comfort in a place you know. Sometimes we cannot change or leave even though we understand it's the best thing for everyone so we need a little shove out of the nest. Let them know, while they have some great traits and attributes, they just aren't

the right fit for the current program. Most camps that I know of have kids line up for everything and run their programs with more structure than freedom, so they should be able to find a camp that is a good fit for them without a problem. You say they are good at their job and the kids like them. If that is the case and you feel comfortable with it, let them know that you are willing to be a good reference for them as they explore other camp options. It's better that you do this now then possibly having to fire them mid-season for insubordination.

The narrative-style camp video I've been talking about for years! From Gabe Chernov and Birch Trail Camp.

<http://youtu.be/I5zYG6f2USc>

(full disclosure: BTC is a client of ours and I was involved on the pre-production of this video... But I'd still LOVE it, even if I wasn't involved)

Jack Schott

Love it!

Jennifer Lee

Really fun!

Michele Maggio Branconier

What a great video! Gabe Chernov LOVE it!!

Lauchlin Burnett

awesome video. well done!

Ryan Reed

Wow!

Blake Sunshine Leiber

I love, love, love this video. I would love to know more about how they are getting this video in front of new families (ads, marketing, etc.).

Brian Sense

this is the absolute best camp video i have seen...Well done!

James Davis

Wow. Bar raiser.

Matt Wilcox

Brilliant visual storytelling. Thanks for sharing!

Stephanie Ruby Compton

Fantastic! Thanks for sharing.

Patti Sampson

Oh wow. That really is fantastic!!!

Cassie Jahn

That's amazing!

Elliott Fraughton

Great Video!

Elizabeth Wayman Cochran

Love the subtle details like parents drinking wine while checking out camp pics and the way the camper clears the table when she gets home from camp. actually made me cry a little! thanks for sharing!

Adam Issadore

Excellent!!!!

Joseph Marciszyn

Great Video!

Matt Buczek

Good Lord this is amazing. Not surprised. I visited this camp this summer and it is wonderful.

Michele Maggio Branconier

I just showed this to my 13 year old - he LOVED it! Great video.

JOB POSTING: Camp Harmony in Hooversville, PA will be hiring a Program Director to begin August 2015. Opportunities for beginning before that will be possible based on the candidate's availability. The position is full-time and year-round. For more information and a detailed job description, please contact Camp Harmony at 814-798-5885 or email harmony@campharmony.org

Kelly Daly

Mallory Zingone

Paul Schoen

Will Foster

Cortney Tyger

Wanted to bring attention to this post again as the deadline for applications is quickly approaching. The deadline for applications is 3/30/15 and interviews will begin shortly after that. I have uploaded the job description to the files section of this group. Thanks!

Cortney Tyger

Also, you can find the Camp Harmony Employment Application at www.campharmony.org/applications.html

Camp Harmony Program Director Job Description

David Hegge

Are you hiring to start for the summer or afterwards?

Cortney Tyger

We would like the individual to be able to come on in a different role for the summer and then take on the program director position after summer.

David Hegge

That's what I am finding at a lot of camps so far. My internship goes until the end of August, possibly beginning of August and most positions right now are hiring for this summer.

Cortney Tyger

Ideally, that's what is preferred but we are accepting any applications.

Hey #CampPros - anyone have a set of waterfront policies/procedures they would be willing to share? I'm not an aquatics person, but I know what we have now isn't adequate and I'd like to take care of that ASAP. We're a ~110 camper wilderness day camp with a swimming area on a small pond.

Thanks!

Chris Harper

And if anyone has any regs specific to paddle boarding I'd appreciate it!

This is so cool. Unstructured play is important!

Jack Shearer

I've said this for years.

Chris Klingenberg

I love this attitude.

This is soooo me at camp

Feeling like Staff Training planning is going to be STRESSFUL this year?

You should check out the Camp Code podcast from Stephanie Ruby Compton, Gabrielle Raill and Beth Allison!

Download it for free to your phone and listen while opening cabins, turning the water on or driving to your next staff interview!

<http://zoic.ca/CampCode> (iTunes)

<http://zoic.ca/CampCodeStitcher>

Most of the shows are also up on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1cXJlepEVwxQB5t9y3GQlaoAGc7vN0ah>

How does a carpetball hold up outdoors?

Derek Bergman

Ours are doing well, depends on how it is built

Holly Scott

Ours does great and we are located in Washington. We have created a covering over each carpetball though which has been key.

Andrew Brehmer

How is it built that helps it withstand the elements, or what type of covering do you have? Is it a pavilion type covering, or one that is removed for each use?

Michael Landry

Have build many out of pressure treated wood including the plywood and they have held up great. Never brought them in or covered them. After a few years applied stain to lengthen life.

Holly Scott

Here's a picture of our structure. The roof is just a metal one, sorry it's a little dark.

Nathan Payne

Josh Grantham Theron Birdsong

Anyone else having a hard time finding Camp Nurses this year? Any (NEW) ideas of where to advertise or advice?

Laura Polis

Email school districts/nurses, we were able to completely restart a term this way

Nicole Amedeo Griffith

Following

Colin Stewart

This year and every year. It's the living on site that's the problem. Who wants to uproot their home and life for two months a year?

Jeb Lapeyrolerie

It's too late for this year but most states have school nurse associations which have annual conferences - i have gotten a booth in their exhibit hall and gotten names - I shared the expense with a couple of other camps - it was very successful

Julie Keats Stoelzel

Try SchoolSpring.com

Melissa Gail Banks

Indeed.com. I had at least 4 qualified local applicants. Be very clear in your posting about living conditions, pay, and work hours. Nursing school instructors can also be great candidates as they often have summers free.

Kim Steward Betts

ACN (Assoc of Canp Nurses)

Dan DeMatte

We put it on our parent eval for the following year. We end up getting a lot of nurses saying they are I retested for the next summer

Great idea for Rainy days aka liquid sunshine!!!

We need to start composting all on site food waste due to new regulations for our camp for 200 people per day(no road access). Any camps using systems that are working and affordable?

Chris Retz

I set something up last year and we are composting food waste, all napkins and all paper towels from the bathrooms for 245 people a week residential. You will need a tractor to turn the pile, but I made everything else out of old wood. I set it up like garden stores set up their bins for bulk rock or mulch.

Looking for a summer position or have some great applicants who applied too late? We still have availability at Girl Scouts of West Central Florida camps for a few senior staff leadership positions (specifically: waterfront director, program/leadership director, assistant director/business manager), kitchen assistant, boat driver, and counselor/activity staff positions. All 5 of our properties are minutes from the Gulf beaches and a short drive to Universal/Harry Potter World and Disney World! Applications and position descriptions can be found here:
<https://www.gswcf.org/en/our-council/careers.html>

Full-time, Year-Round Job: Do you love Joss Whedon, Ray Mears, Jean Luc Picard and Ursula K Le Guin? Trackers Earth is looking for a Northwest Regional Director. This is a position of operational leadership, cultural stewardship and deft strategy. A couple caveats. Our camp and community culture is "unique" and not for everyone. We know everyone says that, but this is for reals. Were a mix between a Fremen Sietch, Bartlett's West Wing, Sons of Anarchy and BSG (2003). Throw in the Muppet Show for good measure. Stats:

Scope: Full-time, Year-Round. Starts when position is filled with the right individual.

Location: Portland, Oregon with some programs in outlining areas. Portland is known for a high quality of life with a low cost of living. Intermittent travel to the Bay Area.

What: Operational captain, cultural steward and strategist for Trackers Earth Oregon.

Required: Administrative experience. Outdoor competency. Excellent strategist. Thoughtful leader.

Who: Experienced individuals interested in and qualified for a full-time position guiding Trackers Earth. We welcome applicants from all areas and regions (everywhere).

When: Apply to start as possible. We fill the position when the right fit finds us. So it may be years.

Compensation: \$40,000 - \$50,000 a year. We recognize this is a wide range. This position is a unique challenge in operational leadership, cultural stewardship and strategy. It may require in-depth training and trial to adapt, highly dependent on experience and capabilities. Includes medical benefits, paid holiday, vacation time, and sick leave.

Curt Jackson

Another dream job for the right person. I'll apply if you can get Joss Whedon on the interview panel.

Tony Deis

Curt, I will try.

I am preparing staff training and I want to put my staff through some scenario/role playing activities to gain some experience before the live shots fire. What are some camper or parent situations that may happen over a summer that a staff member may face?

Tink Rabey-Hall

Buy yourself --
<http://www.amazon.com/How-Long-Visiting-Day-Role-Playing/dp/1450577814> -- great compilation. You might also run a Google search -- I just did looking for the title of the book and found a surprising number of options :).

Anna Charlotte

Home sickness

Hannah Hudson

Parent taking forever to leave/helicoptering

Hannah Hudson

Defiant camper leaving bunk while only one counselor present/need to talk to them privately.

Conrad Jeffrey

A difficult one I faced was a camper bullying another camper but the parent not classifying what the camper was doing as bullying.

Chris Torres

Meal times, we turned a staff meal into training where returners were assigned the role of kids and new staff would handle them and then after lunch we discussed what happened it was a lot of fun and very beneficial

Fabio Del Carlo

I've done a lot of homesickness scenarios, from extreme to mild. Rowdy kids in the bunk.
Kids refusing to do an activity.
Kids keeping others up at night.
Sports/coaching scenarios where lots of times kids get frustrated if someone in their team sucks.
I usually add in a counselor role and how they can solve those challenges in an effective way. (Usually a lot of Bob Ditter techniques if you are familiar with him.

Laura Wallace

We usually do about 6 - homesickness, bullying, excluding a camper, rowdiness, excessive swearing, fighting. We have the scenes set up in the different bunks by returning counselors and leadership staff. The new counselors go around in small groups and take turns being the "counselor". We then debrief at the end. It is one of our most requested orientation activities. I also have the scenes change if the "counselor" opts to prevent - like distracting the rowdy "campers" with a game before they go truly crazy.

Sue Ballard

You could work through a few scenarios where parents ask when they can call to talk to their camper, or if the parent thinks they could just come and pick up their camper if they get homesick, or other questions parents may ask the day they bring their children to camp, etc. It can be tricky for young counselors to deal with those questions in a way that conveys

your policies in a friendly - yet confident and assertive - manner.

Chelsey Land

I'm from a Day Camp and we deal with Sunscreen or lack of sunscreen issues (or have in the past) so I always do a scenario where an angry parent comes in accusing a staff member of not following sunscreen rules.

Suzi Schroeder Pierce

Check this out Amy Schmied

Brendan Vaughan

So we do a king of the hill type game. Where two people sit at the front of the room. One is the "camp director" and the other is a parent. The goal is to NOT show your ("O" face or really be phased by anything they say) and you let the staff try and stump the other staff with scenarios they make up on the spot.

Kelly Margaret Milne

Helping two campers resolve an argument. I also found it helpful to role-play staff conflict resolution as well!

Cayson J Thurman

Had a parent climb into the rafters and then started doing pull ups. All the rafters in multiple stops say no climbing or hanging from them.

Angela Sheridan

Encouraging a camper to participate in a challenging activity or a boring activity instead of always sitting on the sideline. Encouraging a camper to clean.

2 hometown friends come to camp hometown friend A is making new friends and hometown friend B having difficulty making new friends. Hometown friend B feels constantly sad and left out.

Seth Houser

I posted one in the "Files" part of this page last year.

Michael Garcia Ymca

I use this it has some good items. http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/B0017SGL1G/ref=asc_df_B0017SGL1G3088781?ie=UTF8&condition=new&tag=pgmp-1140-97-20&creative=395169&creativeASIN=B0017SGL1G

Casey Hart

Don't forget accidents. Especially with younger kids staying over night

Ashley Sylvester

cabin switching; direction giving ("there" is not a place); emergency protocol; calling home; homesickness

Someone about a month or so ago posted a small equipment maintenance log that was an excel spreadsheet. Could that get reposted or at least point me in the right direction so that I can get it again. Thanks.

Natalie Kemp

If you click on the "Files" tab at the top of this group page you'll see it listed and can download it. Currently it's 12th from the top.

Does anyone use Camp Brain as their registration platform that wouldn't mind me logging in (as a parent) and going through the motions of registering a camper without actually registering? :)

Ben Smoky Radley

Sure! <https://registration.campbrain.com/Portal/Login.aspx?H=PleasantHillOutdoorCenter&G;=1145> Feedback would

Mike Moose Greenfield

absolutely -
<https://registration.campbrain.com/Portal/Login.aspx?H=CampWidjiitiwin&G;=609>

Mary McSherry

Thank you! Ours is www.camptoccoa.org, as I was adding an additional camp to ours I began wondering what other camps registration who use Camp Brain look like.

Jerrold Henoch

feel free to try ours too. Interested in any feedback as well. Just use test as your last name and then I'll know to ignore and delete later.
<https://registration.campbrain.com/Portal/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fPortal%2fHome.aspx>

Neves Benton

Follow

Anyone at or going to the New England Conference this weekend?

Kris Ebner Martin

Sorry, no. Had too much fun last week to repeat!

Charles Giegerich

You will be missed Kris

Kris Ebner Martin

Behave and know I am gutted to be missing it!

Looking for an amazing individual for a full time camp director position at Camp Latona www.camplatona.com Message me if you would like details, must be legal to work in Canada!

Jill Lawlor

You can email info@camplatona.com

For those of you who did not get a chance to hear Hillary live last week at Tri-State, here's our take on Hillary's 'camp' points. Feel free to share as we think she 'gets camp.'
<http://www.everythingsummer.com/blog/hillary-goes-to-camp#.VRWAg3ktHIU>

Hey Everyone,
Had a great Tri State 2015 in Atlantic City i made a little video to document our week if anyone is

interested its: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kysNV7blqsE&feature;=youtu.be>

Cant wait to see you all next year.

Here is some information about Bark Lake Leadership Centre's NLS Waterfront course happening in June. <http://barklake.com/?p=1649>

So close...

Curt Jackson

SHUT UP! No Way! I remember there being...well, I can't remember that far back, but it was in the hundreds.

Travis Allison

You know what the biggest gathering of Camp Professionals in the world is?

US.

You know who is changing this industry for the better everyday?

US.

You know who works harder than anyone at giving kids transformational experiences that have the power to completely turn around their lives?

US.

Who is going to keep alive summer camp for the next 100 years?

We are.

Tink Rabey-Hall

Well said, Travis Allison, well said!

Parent: "So you must be looking forward to the summer. It's got to be a great break and so relaxing up there on the lake, right?"

Me: Are you talking to me? Are you talking to me? (in a DeNiro voice)

Laura Fuese Hall

My favorite is...what do you do the rest of the year? (Bonus points if you ask me this while we are on the phone in the non-summer months)

Camp Gallahue

I had a parent say I must enjoy sitting on my porch and reading a book. yeh- that's what I do camp! relax on my porch and read while everything else is going on :)

Jen Dundas

good one Marc!

Carinna Pellett

Just ask them to come switch with you for a day during the summer....they wouldn't make it!
Lol

Cheryl Suydam-Taylor

LOL!!!!

Kate Taylor

"Like a teacher looks forward to September, yep..."

Angela E. Arneal

My favorite is when the counselors who are THERE assume that's my job. Just take it easy, watch everything from afar. Yep. That's me.

Thursday greetings! I'd very much appreciate your ideas on swimming & pool programming for your color wars/Olympics events. We traditionally hold a swim meet, but it is more watching and waiting than it is participating. What have you seen be successful? Thanks - Marty marty@airylouise.org

Curt Jackson

One thing is to make it a part of a camp wide relay. Another is to put a canoe in the water and do the challenge that Badyr posted yesterday. Log rolling would also be a cool challenge to watch.

#CampPros Today I have the dreaded task of telling interviewees that they did not get the Summer Camp Staff position for this season, some of which are staff members from years past. How do you handle these sensitive discussions?

Erin Stevenson

We regret to inform you on this instance we have gone with a candidate who's skills match better with the requirements of camp. We wish you all the best of luck for your summer where ever you end up. Will be happy to provide you with feedback upon your request for this

Erin Stevenson

Past years. Maybe not that tho

Victoria Watson

Be prepared for them to ask a lot of questions about why they didn't get the job!!

Ashley Powell

All the questions is what I am afraid of. One interviewee who was a staff member last year treated the interview like he had it in the bag. He wore a t-shirt, basketball shorts, and played with a puppy during the Skype interview. Did I plan on bringing him back, yes, but after he did not take the interview seriously, I do not want to bring him back.

Sue Ballard

Just remember to be objective , emotions should not play a part in the discussion.

Hannah Hudson

I would want the person telling me "no thanks" to be honest, especially if we know each other. Honesty, with a direction to go in. I got rejected for a job once and when I asked what

I could do better in the future they just said "it's a tough market. Good luck!" Which felt like a blow off. So, if there's a way to be honest without being mean or downputting. (I would also hope that if it were a returning applicant, their supervisor discussed their behavior with them LAST summer, if that's the reason for getting turned down this summer.) I feel a generic "let down" leaves more room for hurt feelings and that can lead to defamation. But then again, I've never had to tell someone, "you didn't make it."

Lee Jones

These are young adults (college kids) who are still learning. So, use this as a teaching moment with them. Be honest in why they weren't hired. No matter what you say to them, they'll still be hurt. Years from now they should appreciate your honesty and possibly never make the same mis-steps in the future, Never an easy conversation though.

Brad Cripe

Honesty! Perhaps with old staff... suggestions on how to do better

Mark Young

Ashley Powell Disney takes any employee or intern and gives them a review of the interview. Here is what you did right, here is what you did wong, and next time try this. That way it becomes a positive learning experience. That may be hard to to with a lot of people, but, it would set you apart from the crowd, and make your camp a place that everyone ones to apply to.

Coleman Weibley

We send staff we would like to return an invitation to come back in November/December. This year, we offered a signing bonus to those to responded by a certain date. We tell them when we invite them back they are only guaranteed a position to a certain date, and if they don't respond, then we can't make promises as we start the hiring process. Obviously, we don't invite staff back who we felt were not great at the job and offer to have a discussion with them regarding why... we also let them reapply for a chance to return.

Colette Marquardt

I believe in telling them why they didn't get hired. Its something people don't get anymore when simple emails back that say "no thank you" are the new normal, how are people supposed to get better for the next time if they don't hear the truth? I also try to show compassion and focus all attention on the person not getting the job. As hard has it is to turn someone down, being turned down is far worse. I usually ask if they would like to know why they didn't get the job and some tips for next time. Allow them to say yes or no to your feedback before offering.

Nate Cook

I've had to defer people who showed a genuine interest, but when we tried reaching out for an interview, never called back, or called us back too late. I have interview next week schedule for an applicant who did not get the job. You snooze you lose. It's that simple. Of course I won't be that callous.

Natasha Marie

Feedback is always helpful! I know that I really appreciate knowing what I did well and what I can improve upon. If you treat it as a teaching moment, you might feel a little less nervous about it.

Peggy Yetman

I would have to ask myself the question of why the person didn't get the position! Was it based only on this Skype interview or are there other reasons. A Skype interview, especially with high school or college students and given the fact that this person knows you personally, could be a factor in why this person was so casual. If this person was a good employee last year, then this interview would not be the basis of not hiring them but rather teaching opportunity for them. I would be honest and tell them the truth of how they almost blew their opportunity.

The way that this young man presented himself on Skype may not be a reason for him not getting the position.

Ashley Powell

Peggy Yetman He did not meet the position qualifications set forth also. We had very little qualified applicants last year. This year, our numbers doubled. So bad interview, whether he knows me or not, coupled with not meeting the qualifications was grounds enough. The director and I felt.

Peggy Yetman

That makes perfect sense then! :)

Christine Radford-Long

I always write responses after interviews. Albeit to accept or decline. But you must give a reason. Be honest - it will help them grow whether it feels 'good' or not.

James Lortie

Maybe this is lame or insensitive, but we do all our communication over email. We do this because a) it gets the same information across to all candidates, whether successful or unsuccessful; b) it's easier for us too. Takes about 10 minutes to send them all out.

That being said, we ask them at the interview if email is not ok. If they answer no, they'd prefer a phone call then we'll do that. 99% say email.

Noah Gallagher

Honesty all the way. Email is just fine. In the case of a returner or a former camper, I want that email to be sensitive, personal, and include a basic reason for the rejection and a genuine offer for further discussion.

James Lortie

Perfectly reasonable Noah. We're a special needs camp so we don't really face that side of it all that often.

Wade Nyhuis

If I have a lot of applicants and I have to turn down people who would still be good in the camp setting or if they apply after all positions are full I will tell them that they should continue to pursue working at camp for the summer and that if they would like a list of camps that I know are still hiring I could send them that list.

Tink Rabey-Hall

Ashley Powell, I would love to talk to any of them who are at least 20 and have waterfront credentials -- we are in need of a Waterfront Director this year. Also, could use one more male counselor. Send them our way! www.WeLoveCamp.org

Elizabeth Dawson Shreckhise

Coleman Weibley, when you send those letters, do they include a specific position? Or do you just indicate that you want them back at camp in general?

Coleman Weibley

It is just a general invitation... unless we feel someone deserves a promotion or they ask and begin the interview process, then there contracts are sent with the same position as last year.

Tim Carruthers

I write ours in limericks!

There was a young staff who applied
For the job that we ad-ver-tized
The skills were subpar,
And references said "Stay far!"
So the request for a job's been denied.

Any camps out there use E-Verify and hire international staff? Any in WA? What barriers do you come across?

Hello everyone! I work for an outdoor education program in Larkspur, Colorado. We are run through the Douglas county school district, and are currently hiring for our spring season. Or staff lead and facilitate outdoor science, education, and leadership modules in addition to providing cabin supervision to visiting students. If anyone is interested, or knows anyone interested in being part of this team, please contact me at dhandrich@dcsdk12.org. The position runs from April 1-June 5. Thanks!

Staff and mental health issues. How do you approach the situation of staff expressing they are dealing with depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts? During camp, and prior to a new season.

Kelly Rossebo

As an employer, my conversation would center around how they thought it would affect their ability to do their job well.

David Seddon

Check out MESH profiles on ACA Resources Website. Helpful stuff. Great question by the way.

Nicky Bates

While obviously the staff's mental health is important, make sure you have a conversation about appropriate sharing. At a Lutheran Camp during faith story sharing a counselor shared their struggles with depression, bi-polar disorder and suicide with a group of kids who were way to young to have that conversation and they were really upset/scared by it.

It (arguably) would have been beneficial had an older kid shared similar feelings with the counselor who could have said "hey, I've been there" but it was the wrong place, wrong time, wrong audience.

Grego Dow

Thanks for the resources David Seddon. What would be your biggest concerns in their performance or interaction with campers Kelly Rossebo? Probably a good staff training topic Nicky Bates, (what is appropriate to share vs too much info or age appropriateness).

Maybe even have staff write it out first to be reviewed before sharing to monitor content.
Other thoughts on this topic?

Bethany Ringdal

I've had struggles with this in recent years. I've treated it like any other illness; if a counselor tells me that they can't work with kids that week because their anxiety is acting up, I don't treat it any differently than if their bum knee is acting up--I push them to do what they can, and then trust their analysis of their capacity. Then again, I try not to hire people whose bum knees will keep them from working--same thing for mental health.

Kelly Rossebo

I am recalling a conversation with a staff member about bi-polar where he told me that in his lows he would crawl into bed and not be able to come out for a day or two. That would impede his ability to do his job. He made the choice to resign when he realized he would not be able to fulfill his duties.

Amanda Dotson

I had an amazing staff that dealt with major anxiety. We had open conversation about her supports at camp and what I could do to support her. We ended up working out that she'd work all day but sleep at home. She eventually grew to trust the leadership team and was able to stay at camp throughout the entire session. It's important for leadership to understand how the mental illness will impact their job- but also that the leadership look at how to support that staff. Camp is a place for people to grow- campers and staff.

April Keighan

I would always prefer someone be upfront about medical issues they're having. That way you can try and work with them in being able to fulfill their duties, but also help them get the help they may need. If it really gets out of hand and they can't do their job any longer, then you can deal with it then. I had a staff member last year who did not tell me about a medical condition he had. I ended up having to lay him off for other reasons, but due to this medical condition, he passed away 4 days after he left camp. I can't imagine how wrong things could have gone had he passed at camp. I suppose the point I'm getting at, is that it's good to know about all medical/mental health issues.

Grego Dow

How would you approach hiring when a person has been hospitalized recently due to these issues? I know many people deal with mental health issues to various degrees at various times, but when things get out of line enough requiring intervention, how do you respond? And what are the ramifications of this within your camp?

Paul Petersen

I agree with what others have posted here except for the last one "having suicidal thoughts." That's a whole different issue that carries a different urgency. I was a campus pastor for 25 years before becoming a camp director last year and I always....ALWAYS...tried to convince the person having suicidal thoughts to walk with me to the counseling office on campus. (nearly all agreed!) A good friend who is a professional counselor reminded a group of us pastors once that what we do is "pastoral care", not "counseling". Unless we hold the credentials, we should all be careful about not overextending ourselves into areas we don't have expertise in. We can walk with them and be supportive, but must leave the counseling to professionals. I say that for our legal reasons and for the wellbeing of the person who lives with anxiety disorders, depression and especially those with suicidal thoughts.

Mike Stewart

Not sure if this is what you're getting at Greg, but in terms of hiring staff with mental health challenges we can't discriminate on that basis in Ontario (<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/human-rights-and-mental-health-fact-sheet>). So, if we are aware of a pre-existing mental health condition in an applicant, we must give them equal consideration to any other applicant. When it comes to those hired staff who may face challenges during the summer, all you can do is provide support for them. Best thing you can do is to ask them what support it is that they need. Some may require accommodations (i.e. changing job responsibilities), others may need some time off, and others may need you to help them connect to professionals. That link above has some great resources around our duties as employers in Ontario.

Rich Rinaldi

Call HR first! We are coaches, not therapists. The best help may be from someone more qualified than us.

Mark 'Vauxchen' Painter

I've dealt with depression at camp and I spoke to our resident nurse/on site medical professional, and then they helped with what they could at the time which was giving me a night on my own if I needed it, or maybe changing some things around to make life a bit easier, but it was spoken about both in a professional way and also as my friend. So, having a caring person people know they can go to is a huge bonus, and make sure that all staff know who they can go to.

Does anyone have a swing like the ripcord at Worlds of Fun? Wondering what it would take to build one.

Not the same size obviously.

Derek Bergman

We know of 1, maybe 2 camps that use it as a team challenge. The group pulls up one of their own then the participant is released and flies on the big swing. Does no one else have something like this? How does it work at your camp?

Will Shelton

I've seen the camp sized event most commonly referred to as the Giant Swing. A quick search for "Giant Swing Camp" yielded a ton of results.

Laura Fuese Hall

We have a Giant Swing at camp. It has been great for camp and for our rental groups. I recommend it.

Derek Bergman

How did you build or can you PM me any pictures of how it works?

Laura Fuese Hall

Sure, email me at director@campstcharles.org

Hey Camp Pros! I saw this video today from AskDoctorG and was wondering what kind of independence you all allow your campers. A lot of our camp activities happen at a field that is about a 7-9 minute walk along a defined path to the place that parents pick up and drop off. Would you let kids who had showed they were able to handle it walk this with a buddy? We also have wildlife concerns....bear and moose specifically. It would be great to hear what other camps do!

Chris Kaake

We let campers traverse the main area of camp with a buddy, but we don't have any concerns with large animals during the day.

SUMMER CAMP PROS! Do you know an Absolutely Incredible Kid? Today is their day! Post/share this comment with who in your life is Absolutely Incredible! Be sure to use #AIKD and #campfire! Then nominate 3 others to do the same! Can you help us out spreading the word about this Awesomeness? Thanks!

Today is create your own holiday day- so we have declared it National #CampRocksDay2015. Join us in celebrating by sharing your love and passion for camp. We may not be at summer camp now, but we can connect and spread our message through social media today with our amazing camp community!

Any camps in durham region area hiring counsellors. I am an ECE with a school board

We're a nationwide summer camp looking for EXCELLENT people who are more than just "camp staff" we're looking for buddies, dreamers, doers, mentors, imagineers, empowerment pros, and quirky folks to help make the best summer for our campers at locations across the country. If this sounds like you and you're looking for a new adventure, check us out!

Curt Jackson

Nathan, this is the kind of Facebook group where you might post year round leadership positions, not seasonal ones, as we are all looking for seasonal staff for our programs right now. Good luck to all of us.

Nathan Eggleston

We hire exceptional year round staff from incredible seasonal staff, we have some great opportunities on the east coast in particular. Check it out! You might be surprised :)

Curt Jackson

Nathan, I did go to the page that you posted here and it's all seasonal positions. I'm just trying to help you. If you have a page with full-time, year-round positions, that's the one you want to post in this group.

I thought this would be an awesome activity for color wars.

Peggy Yetman

Fantastic. :)

Rich Rinaldi

MaryAnn Noble Birchler -- show Brent for Color War. I didn't tag him because I knew he wouldn't see ;)

Jason Smith

Neil Sherps Walter - wonder if there is anyway to make this work with the Princess Pat?

Erin Stevenson

That's fantastic

Ella Brakefield

Ginger Clare! How about this?!

Stefan Rusky

its really cool!

Joshua Van Horn

Neil Pickus we need to do this.

Michael Petitpas

You can do it with two canoes tied together by a length of rope.

Todd Churchill

So cool

Susan Sunni Richardson

Definitely a camp activity

Hillary Danielle

Jessica!

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Hillary , omg for the lap pool

Hillary Danielle

Jessica or even the lake...with 2 canoes tied together

David Mui

this is so cool. i like the idea of two canoes tied together.

David Mui

Susan Titus

Jessica Heely Huennekens

Making a note to include that as a culminating activity in the boating curriculum Hillary

Elizabeth Monica

Isaac Brubaker Jeremy Reder Angela Hall guys i think i just found a new game for ACE's :)
:)

Kate Tucci

Susanna Shigo Maxwell Johnson

Susanna Shigo

Kate we are doing it this summer. It's already decided.

Maxwell Johnson

Agreed Susanna Shigo Kate Tucci

Ivor Lewis

In a canoe 1on1 might be fun

Holly Scott

Check it out Greg and Josh!!

Nathan Scott Brant

Yes!

Kristen Parkin

We need to adjust this and do this this summer during water week Jason Menia

Nathan Scott Brant

Kam Kobeissi and Amanda South Mountain Ymca

We're in the hiring process. Is anyone else having more and more parents contact you about counselor positions for their college aged kids? How do you handle that? Is it rude to ask the parent to have their young adult contact me directly?

Kale Boehmer

"As counsellors will be expected to supervise and care for children, we expect a high degree of personal responsibility from them. This expectation begins before the hiring process where we ask that applicants demonstrate their maturity and independence."

That, or something along the lines of 'unless you're the one signing the contract, you're not the one I should be speaking to' usually worked for me in the past.

Connor Andrew Harthorn

If their child is in college there is no way you should have to hear from the parents of your staff. They are adults and I know last summer when I worked at camp my parents had nothing to do with me getting my job or getting rehired for this summer. They should have to demonstrate enough independence to get their job

Logan Wicketts

I'm in college and the thought of someone having their mom contact a boss for a job is frightening! I would say ...Well if they are the ones interested in a job please have them contact me.

Connor Andrew Harthorn

Now I am in college as well

Roger Barkman

I'm not hiring YOU, please have your child apply directly. Thank you,

Jon Salmon

I don't think it is rude at all, I think that the expectations that we have for our staff members make it completely appropriate that they should be connecting with the employers themselves.

Bill Waite

If a mom or dad contact me about find a job for their kids, I almost never will hire them. I am polite and don't tell them that, but its a death blow for an applicant. However, If you do interview them, ask them why their parent contacted you. Either they will sink or fail.

Roger Barkman

Last summer I had one employee that was quiet, I talked to his mother via phone then him. He will not be back.

Bill Waite

<http://www.oswegatchie.org/updates-blog/5-best-tips-for-young-job-seekers>

Bill Waite

I also put my parent calling policy out there as well to ward off helicopter parents. I link this post to my employment page. If mom and dad don't read it, their loss.

Bill Waite

I am 95% with staff hiring, I just need a wsi / aquatic director

Rick Doucette

I've drafted a response letter from my Mom to send to parents seeking employment for their children. Have not actually sent it out (yet), but it was fun to create and provided a few chuckles.

Kale Boehmer

Please share that letter!

Andrew Brehmer

I've had that problem as well. The bigger one that I get though is the parent calling my executive director complaining that I don't know how to hire when I didn't select their child to be on my staff.

Bill Waite

I have not had that problem yet, but my boss has my back on that one.

Susanna Shigo

As a college aged student that began working at summer camp 2 years ago, I would have never thought to have my parent call a camp. I work as a your guide at my college now and it directly relates to that. When I have parents hovering and asking questions, I know they have the best intention, but when they get to a point where they seem more interested than their child it makes me think that it may not be the place for them. As a young adult it is your decision and if they don't have the voice to ask themselves, what will they have the voice to do?

Jeb Lapeyrolerie

Dealt with it today - very politely say thank you please have them contact me.

Shawn Gray

The only time I understood hearing from a parent is when I had his daughter as a youth group member grow up and want to be a counselor. The relationship was already there that the parent talks to me about the daughter.

Glenda Maria Thompson

I'm in college myself and the idea of my mother calling my boss asking questions freaks me out. At the end of the day they are adults and they should be able to reach out themselves about possible summer employment.

Rebecca Patton

I don't talk to parents. This includes when there has been any sort of disciplinary action. You're old enough to get a job, you're old enough to face the consequences of not doing said job correctly.

Rick Doucette

Kale Boehmer

AMAZING.

Jeb Lapeyrolerie

Love it

Katrina Hamilton

haha -"have your people contact my people". That is so great.

Connor Andrew Harthorn

that is pure gold.

Hey #CampPros - Who's at #NECampConf right now??!!

Ryan Reed

Camp Takodah is here!

We are looking for social workers and nurses for an overnight camp. Any suggestions where we should post???? Thanks!

Amy Heidotten

Where and when??

Robyn Gershenoff Judelsohn

Nurses in the Poconos from mid-June-Aug 5 and social workers varying 2 week sessions in June, July and August.

Brad Cripe

Us too, southern WI june-Aug!

Mary M Siniard

social workers...advertise to school social workers who may be looking for summer income!

Kim Steward Betts

We post at ACN (Association of Camp Nurses), CampStaff.com and Craigslist. We are also looking for more nurses!

Julie Keats Stoelzel

SchoolSpring.com

Lindsay Lowe

I came on here to post the same thing... ah the struggles of finding Camp Nurses....

When searching for furthering my education in the camping world, I am seeing a lot of bachelor and master programs. Anyone know of any doctoral programs in areas relative to camp? I am currently a 4-H youth development educator, I have my A.S and B.S degree in Production Agriculture and Natural Resources, and will be completed with my Masters in the summer of 2016 with a MS in Agriculture Leadership, Education and Communication. I was a camper for 9 years and a counselor for 6 years and looking to possibly become for competitive in the camp professional realm. Any suggestions would be helpful.

Karen Sonshine

Where are you doing your Master's?

Katie Elizabeth

University of Tennessee because I am employed by them.

Heather Slimp

It depends on what your area you want to focus on within camp. Do you want to continue with education to develop curriculum for camps? Research? Or, do you want to manage a camp? For education, you would probably want to go the Ed.D route and there are a lot of programs out there. For research, look into the University of Utah's Ph.D in Parks, Recreation and Tourism. If you want to go into management, your MA will already make you competitive, you should look for positions that will give you experience in a management/director role.

Katie Elizabeth

Ideally a mix of developing curriculum and education and being a camp director or extension camp specialist.

Marcie Glad

following

Rosemary Pezzuto

there is a program in Wisconsin. I will try to find the info

Rosemary Pezzuto

I believe it is in Experiencial Educaton.

Dave Hennessey

Would like info as well... Just received TUN-Online Master's in Camp Administration and Leadership

Dave Hennessey

Dave Malter

Melissa Gail Banks

I agree with Heather. I think a Masters is going to make you more than competitive in most fields as a Camp Director or Program Manager. There are several excellent PhD programs in Rec Management and Experiential Ed, but at some point you should enter the field and get the practical experience to balance your education. A degree in non-profit or business management might serve you better if you want to rise through the ranks of program management.

Dave Malter

I think that you need to make the educational choice that works best for your career objective. I would argue that a PhD in this field (or any for that matter) is really meant as a step towards doing research or curriculum development. Depending on what you find, these programs will not provide you the practical experience/education that will result in better job prospects on the director realm.

Jessica Stachulak

I am a graduate of Western Illinois RPTA program with my M.S., they have multiple faculty with ties to the camp field. Another masters may be something to consider, they do a 12 month program, graduate assistanships, a non profit certification and have a field campus they run a small camp on. Paul A. Schlag would be a great person to contact.

Dave Malter

Dave Hennessey...I hope you found some benefit from the degree you worked so hard to obtain.

Dave Hennessey

Absolutely Dave Malter, TUN-Online Master's in Camp Administration and Leadership.

Katie Elizabeth

Well I'm kind of particular with wanting to work with Extension. I currently do work for non profit as a 4H agent and have been for four years. I have experience in coordinating camps but an Extension camping specialist is really the path I want and several universities won't hire without a PhD which is why I inquired.

Cole Perry

The best advice someone gave me looking for PhD programs was to find someone I wanted to work with and learn from. I ended up doing camp research under a positive youth development researcher, but there are lots of great camp researchers doing fascinating work. If you find people you like and they're taking students, that can help with narrowing down to an area of expertise.

Elyse Adelberg-Miller

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Elisabeth Buckley

I recently graduated with my MS Clemson University Youth Development Leadership. For the past yr I've been a AmeriCorps VISTA - Volunteers In Service To America with New Jersey 4-H, New Brunswick 4-H. I've come to learn myself that State Specialist jobs within 4-H now require PHD. For those not familiar with 4-H. Katie Elizabeth current job as a 4-H Agent= equivalent to an associate professor. Through the program's tie to land-grant institutions of higher education, 4-H academic staff are responsible for advancing the field of youth development.

Sovatha Oum

Experiential and outdoor leadership. I've been implementing both in my work for the 33 years and it's been great!

Michael Richard

Prescott College offers a PhD in Sustainable Community Development

This could be fun in a canoe :)

The next big thing at camps? Talk about an awesome marketing tool. I think parents would send their kids just in hopes that maybe, just possibly they would have a chance to go on this too. I don't think you would be able to get the kids off of it. :)

Kayla Ryan

Amazing!!

Kristen Widenmaier

This looks terrifying to me LOL

Jeff McCormack

I imagine many kids wouldn't do it...much scarier than these college kids are making it look.

Laura Twigs Johnson

Eeks! I don't think I would do it, scary.

Heather Slimp

I would be very surprised (in the shocked kind of way) if any camps built something like this. That does not look kid friendly

Glenda Maria Thompson

For campers? Not really (maybe the older ones), for the staff, this will be a GREAT weekend adventure

Jeff McCormack

A belly flop from the height they're dropping in from could probably do some pretty good damage to something.

James Lortie

Insurance nightmare much?

Scott Myers

Notice that they show no children doing this.

Dave Hennessey

To be honest, it looks like our Wet Willie and "the blob" mated and had a child...

The Slip 'N Fly is at the Ohio Dreams Action Sports Camp.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMPMzhglGoo>

Sarah Anne Facey

I just had a liability heart attack...

I'm willing to bet all of those adults signed their life away on a lengthy waiver.

Becky Cavender

That looks scary to me!

Joe Richards

It is just adding graphics not bettering the way that we build amazing people...

Laura Hutler

Nick Coenen - right down the toboggan hill at either site?

Katie Mac

more like the LAST big thing at camps

Jeff McCormack

Maybe a smaller version might work, though. One where the end of the ramp was elevated to the height of a typical diving board. Kids could still get some air, but would be far less likely to get injured.

Lilly Devlin

truthfully, not the kind of camp I want to be working at. No doubt it would be fun though

Iris Maslow

Marty Rochlin - slip n slide?

Ben Smoky Radley

This is located at Ohio Dreams, an action sports camp down the road from us. Think X Games. (they have had campers place in the X Games.) It completely fits in their culture and what their parents expect. What you are seeing actually their landing pool for kids learning to do big air tricks on down hill skis. Very cool place.

Ben Smoky Radley

<http://www.ohiodreams.com/>

Donald Enger

If there was a camp that had this item on it, parents would demand time for their child to slide on this. There would have to be an hour for every cabin to use this each week.

Jeff McCormack

Makes sense if it's an "X Games" type of camp. Those camps have much more inherent risk that the family and camper are aware of going into it. I'm sure the insurance rates are higher because of it. Used to visit Camp Lake Owen in Wisconsin that was an extreme sports camp. They had many activities and equipment that a "typical" camp would deem far too dangerous. Similar to if a family was sending their kid to a football camp, you go into it knowing that injuries could happen.

Ben Smoky Radley

Jeff McCormack. Yup. I am on ski patrol with the director of Ohio Dreams. We compared injury rates one time. lol. Crazy. His parents don't blink an eye at broken bones.

Heather Slimp

Thanks for the info Ben! I think this discussion is a great example of the importance of intentional activities that fit the camp culture and the campers and families the camp serves. Many of us could not imagine this at our camps (oh the shock and insurance horror-my exact thoughts) because it would have nothing to do with the mission and purpose of our camp. Waterfront activities can teach us new skills (wake boarding) or encourage us to take healthy risks (the blob), this camp is using the slide in the right context to do both.

I still wouldn't go on it though...my silly risk taking days are behind me :)

Hannah Hudson

#liability

Looking for a great educational opportunity that is day camp specific? We will be hosting the 3rd annual Day Camp Summit in New Braunfels, Texas on April 23 & 24. Enjoy keynote address, game/song exchange, educational sessions, round-table discussions and more. Registration is only \$110/person and is all inclusive. Registration/info at www.traps.org

Would anyone be willing to chime in? Looking for varying costs of online registration systems. Per registration, student, percentage, monthly fee. Not really sure about the landscape.

Kelly Rossebo

I'm very happy with Camp Minder.

In case you missed it:

Brittany Wiseman

This was such an experience !

Wendy Johnson

Thanks !!

I was wondering if anyone could help me out a bit? I am currently working on my masters in Recreation Management (basically like a business degree with a Recreation emphasis). In my Commercial Recreation class we have to create a business plan with a full budget. I decided to do a camp because I would love to someday in the future open my own camp.

Currently I am focusing on the Dining Hall...I have my camp at a capacity of 250 campers/staff. I have been trying to figure out how many stoves/ovens/grills I need, as well as deep fryers, walk-in freezers, fridges, etc.

also, which is best...electric or gas?

Casey Sukeforth

We have 175 campers/staff, but here are our kitchen numbers: a 6 burner stove & Flat top griddle and two gas ovens underneath (all gas). 2 stand alone convection ovens. No deep fryer. 1 large stand mixer. 1 large hobart dishwasher. 3 sink dish washing system. 2 hand washing sinks, 2 food prep sinks. 1 microwave, 1 industrial size coffee maker, 1 large walking fridge and 1 large walk in freezer, and 1 large ice machine. Hope this helps!

Kara Lynn

Thank you this helps a lot!
You listed several things I never would have thought about, and I had budgeted 3 six burner stoves each with a flat top and broiler...but 3 may be too many.

Lori Rosene

Too many stoves/griddles. You might be interested in a steam jacket kettle (maybe 2)...and my dream kitchen includes a tilt skillet the size of a griddle. Also a commercial meat slicer ...we slice all of our sandwich meat... Proofer/warmer...steam table with at least 5 wells.

Chris Kaake

We have everything Casey mentioned (200 person capacity) and also a large tilt skillet and a commercial warmer. Steamers are fantastic for large groups--quick and easy! Another camp I worked at had a larger capacity (I think 300) and they had a steam kettle and a large standing steamer (looked just like a warmer). We also have both a reach-in cooler and a reach-in freezer, for easy identification of leftovers. I would always go with gas.

Kara Lynn

How many people do you have on cook staff?

Abbie Orozco

We can serve up to 210. We have many of the items listed above (we wish we had a tilt grill) We also have a large convection oven, a reach in milk refrigerator, walk-in fridge in addition to the walk-in freezer, commercial conveyor toaster, salad bar, a commercial dish washer, and commercial stand mixer. Also, don't forget serving supplies, kitchen utensils, large metal bowls, large pots all that adds up as well!

Kelly Rossebo

We have 5 full time people serving 125

Karen Sonshine

Where are you studying?

Kara Lynn

I am studying at Northwest Missouri State University
Missouri, USA

Todd Churchill

Tilt skillet and steam kettles save a lot of money prep time and operational cost

Janet Keilen

Gas!!!

Cori Jacobs Welbes

Gas of course for cooking. Commercial range with two ovens, two convection ovens, I agree with the tilt skillet, but we have a fryer as well (in the South!), 2 warmers, meat slicer, commercial floor stand mixer, Reach in Refrigerator, Walk in cooler and freezer, good size pantry with rolling shelving unit. Check out Commercial kitchen stores for prices. Don't forget about your dish machine and owning vs. renting.

Maggie Braun

You may want to consider a washer and dryer to do your kitchen linens in a convenient place rather sending them off to another part of camp for service.

Sarah Jacobs Resch

Ice machine, mop sink and a fire suppression system/hood over all of the heating appliances. I always forget about the ice machine...

Rosemary Pezzuto

There are some good ideas in the ACA website

Cheryl Suydam-Taylor

I have always been grateful we have a propane stove/oven on the days we lose electricity!

I will start by saying, I know this is a good problem to have!

We sell out registration every year for our day camp. We typically fill up within a few days and our parents are in a frenzy like they are buying concert tickets for a boy band! This year, we had some tech issues on top of our fast sell out and caused a lot of anxiety for our parents. Parents started driving out paper applications when the online system went down just so they didn't lose a spot. It caused us more trouble in the office because we had hundreds of paper apps to process instead of families just doing it online (about 90% of our families register online. We use campbrain).

Do you still accept paper applications if you offer online registration?

For those that open registration at the end of the summer, instead of late winter, how do you make that work?

Does anyone else have the parent registration frenzy and have some tips to make it easier on the parents and us in the office?

Thanks!

Becky Cavender

Once we started the online registration we got rid of paper ones and we are HAPPY we did! We do have about 100 girls register the first week or two for programs and our first program filled in 6 days so it can get a little hectic but they all understand. I'm glad we have something our campers want!

Shawn Moriarty

We still have paper options for campers who maybe their birthday is 2 days after the session starts and our online system would flag them as not eligible. And for folks who may not be able to get online, and for the sessions that I give away to organizations that help kids. Our online system does not allow coupon use.

Shanelle Lambert Rauh

We are looking at possibilities of expanding, but not sure if that is in the near future. Our limit based on our programming, plumbing and transportation has us cap at 260 per week. We offer 10 weeks.

Tink Rabey-Hall

In 2014, 60% of our registrations (includes youth camp, as well as family and adults with special challenges programs) were via paper. An attempt was made in 2011 (before we were here) to switch everything to online and it failed miserably. 60% is still too large a number for us to require the move. We encourage folks to register online and try to make it

easy, but there are far too many here in Connecticut who still do not trust online payment methods, want to write a paper check, or do not use a computer/tablet at home.

Kevin O'Sullivan

We have over 90% online. Should we run into a wait situation we use the postmark on the envelope. Should it come down to a time, we use the time that our mail is generally delivered, around 9:30 a.m.

Elaine D'Erasmus Burnett

We have over 90% online as well, we accept paper registration and then have a volunteer enter the applications online through our in house data base. We use the date of delivery as the registration date.

Curt Jackson

First off, congratulations for offering a program that is so awesome you have a parent frenzy at registration. The last day camp I directed was the same way for certain weeks. We opened registration at midnight so parents had to stay up and at 12:01am try to get their kids registered. At 9am, when we opened, the frenzy was over and we just fielded calls from parents that were either new and didn't know about the midnight registration (even though it was on our website and marketing materials) or were registering for one of the slower weeks (near the end of summer).

All of our registration was done online and we had a tech hiccup one time that caused some panic at 9am. It was all hands on deck answering phones and imputing registrations, but we got everyone in. We did have to accept a few extra campers that day, but it was okay because we always had a few cancellations before camp started anyways. We couldn't expand either due to transportation (ferry to an island).

We tried to do a secret pre-registration for return campers but they all ended up telling their friends about it and everyone just registered a week early.

Is anybody in driving distance of Spokane, WA?

Dusti Mahoney

For what reason?

Mary M Siniard

We are considering a move - my husband is looking at Moody Aviation. Wondered mostly about the area, and possibly about part time work opportunities.

It's my honor to present... The Kid Camp Director! :)
Enjoy!

Molly Modrzynski

Adorable! My first summer as a program director, I loved the part about needing to BREATHE! I can't believe how often I forget about breathing...

Curt Jackson

So fun! How often will videos be made? I want more! I would love to see some subtitles. I missed a lot of what he said, even watching those parts multiple times. Also, lets get him outside and in different locations like Kid President. Just a couple of suggestions. Overall, I love this kid, I love the idea of a Kid Camp Director and , even though I couldn't understand

a lot of it, the video is awesome. Cannot wait for the next one. Keep posting them.

Stephanie Tralongo McClellan

Great video!! I can't wait to see more!!

Erin Bailey Newport

Well done Camp Gray :-)

I'm looking for a camp (In Michigan, Indiana, or Ohio) for a group that can hold between 1000-1500 people for an event. The only camp that I am aware of is Springhill camps in Michigan. We would love to help the group, but we are at 300. Thanks.

Will Shelton

How long is the event?

Kevin O'Sullivan

Will the group is looking for a week and they are bringing in Newsboys for the final night. Money is not an issue as they are planning on charging \$900 - \$1000 per person.

Some of these may work well in a camp setting!

Hi Camp Pros! Do you have a summer staffer that loves camp so much and would like to work at one before joining your staff this summer. We have an immediate opening as an Outdoor Educator at Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum!

Kate Tucci

I'm not looking for a job buuuttttt Go Muskies!! (Alum)

Hi camp pro's! Abbey Road Programs, a high school summer study abroad and pre-college program, is looking for summer program staff and instructors. Please pass this along to anyone you know who might be interested, and we welcome any suggested sites that you suggest we check out for sourcing.

Applicants must have experience working with teenagers/young adults, possess a college degree and have very strong proficiency of the local language that we will be working in. Please refer to the jobs section of our website(<http://www.goabbeyroad.com/summer-language-programs/>), for further details on qualifications and for our online application!

Thanks,

Andrew

One of our camps has pit toilets in the units. Most of our campers are total troopers and don't bat an eye at "roughing it" but it can be a deterring factor for our kids new to camp and for some of our adults. Does anyone have any good suggestions for "sprucing up" their outhouses? We're thinking of adding solar power string lights and having the girls and families paint them to match a theme. I would love to hear any ideas that have worked for other camps.

Jen Dundas

paint the outside with glow in the dark paint designs, have a bucket of cedar chips with a scoop and a scoop of chips can get tossed in after...you know, good ventilation with screening, painting the insides white so they seem cleaner and can be cleaned better, i have heard of some camps getting their pit toilets pumped in the same way you have your septic system pumped so they're never too full/stinky (I haven't done this though).

Matthew Clay Janeway

Simple. We are slowly replacing all of our pit toilets to porta-lets with dump valves that go into the pit. Cheap, Easy to clean, and long lasting.

Ben Smoky Radley

Dump valves go a long way.

Melissa Gail Banks

Do dump valves require electricity? The most we might have would be solar power. We do have water run to sinks nearby. I would love more information on costs/installation of these oh-so-appropriately named dump valves.

Ben Smoky Radley

I was thinking of what you would find in a RV.

Melissa Gail Banks

So they would need water but not electricity. I'm assuming the porta-lets would have water tanks then?

Matthew Clay Janeway

You do not need water tanks.

Matthew Clay Janeway

Twice a week you go service them by emptying the contents by pulling the dump valve, spraying water in them, redump, then fill with water and throw in a scent tab. :)

We are in the process of working on our summer menus.

I think an easy way to work on retention of campers is through an amazing food service and options of healthy and diverse meals.

Healthy and diverse should be attainable but we are finding that it is easier said than done. We have a new head chef coming to work with us this summer which we are very excited about. Would anyone be willing to share their summer menu? Do you go off a weekly or biweekly rotation? We would love to know what works for you and what your campers and staff love.

Beth Allison

Hi Lilly, CampHacker has this tool you can purchase from our website. It not only has a 3 week menu but it also has recipes for every meal, purchasing lists with exact measurements, recommendations for best equipment, ideas to get the best and freshest produce, how to build relationships with local providers, and even what spices to have on hand. It's \$49.95 CAD.
<http://camphacker.tv/camphacker-digital-products/3-week-summer-camp-menu>

There's a young man who's attended my camp for 6 years. He's on the autism spectrum. This past summer he completed the CIT program with some support and sub-par evaluations from cabin counselors stating he seemed "withdrawn." Now he's 17 years old and applied to be a counselor, but

none of my program directors feel like he's ready for the responsibility. What would you do?

Angela E. Arneal

Can he successfully do the job regardless of his disability? His disability should have nothing to do with your decision to hire. Tip toe here.... because you're aware of his disability you could be running into discrimination if you're basing your hire decision on a medical condition.

I'd consider hiring him for a position where he could get more training. That may mean he doesn't get compensated as a counselor. If he's old enough to still attend camp, suggest he attend another summer. If he is too old, present the option for him to volunteer as a junior counselor to get more training. I don't doubt he'll be an asset simply because he's been there and knows the ropes...but that doesn't automatically mean he's qualified either.

Pete Fasano

It's a hard one for sure. We faced a similar situation. Our applicant actually had a few negative reviews. I approached it strictly from the perspective of the job at hand. We all have high expectations of our counselors and they must meet them. If they cannot, the kids' experience might suffer and by extension, your camp's retention and so forth. Our solution was a support role for the individual. He helped with a number of critical needs around camp but he was not responsible for campers. Feel free to message me with any follow up questions about our process.

Kayla Hall

I say hire him, he may be withdrawn but how is he at performing his duties?

Angela E. Arneal

If you don't hire him, be sure to have your documentation from previous summers. Be straight forward with him, too. It may be a matter of meeting with him, voicing your concerns, and setting goals for him. Evaluate him the first couple of weeks to see the progress.

Joel Van Egbert

I had this same situation. With the right mentor he could be an extraordinary role model for similar kiddos.

Rosa Saba

We had something similar -- we invited the CIT for a couple of weeks but put him with an extra CIT in the cabins and talked to the cabin counsellor before. While he wasn't a counsellor in the same capabilities as the other CITs, we knew what to expect and he had an amazing experience which I'm glad we were able to facilitate.

Rosa Saba

*invited him as aCIT

Jessica Heely Huennekens

I don't think his disability should have anything to do with whether or not he's hired. Can he do the job properly and to the standard you set for all of your staff? If yes, great hire him. If he can't, sorry, but it's not a good fit. Just like he shouldn't be discriminated against for having a disability, he also shouldn't be given special favors either. Evaluate him without the bias. If you think he may not be ready yet, but has a lot of potential, hire him on as some sort of assistant so he can learn and grow if you feel that's appropriate. I would make sure though that you be consistent and do that for all staff in that position... Again regardless of

any disability or lack there of.

Side note: I attended my camp for 10 years, 2 as an LIT, and I was not hired the first year I applied.

Melissa Gail Banks

We created a position at our camp to address this situation where a camper who has completed the leadership program wants to transition to staff but might not be ready (or old enough) for a counselor position. We call it Camp Support Staff. It is a general camp position designed to support whichever areas of camp need additional assistance. That allows the staff member to work in multiple areas around camp and wherever they are needed most (kitchen, health center, admin office, counseling, stables, etc). It's a great first-step for folks who know they want to work at camp but haven't found their niche yet. We pay this position about the same as entry-level counselors but will often arrange for shorter contracts or partial summers. I'll post the position description in case anyone else wants to look into creating this position.

Patti Sampson

Hey Christopher, I run a camp for children, youth, and adults with disabilities so I run into this scenario a lot.
Interview him like you would interview any other staff, ask realistic situational questions that he would likely encounter at camp as part of your interview to gauge if he's ready.
I always ask my potential staff what challenges they might encounter during the summer and how they will work to overcome them - I had a staff last year who was on the spectrum and had a visual impairment and he outlined exactly what he would need from me to support him - so I hired him.
As a few other people said, don't make any decisions based purely on his autism, go in to the interview with a wide open mind and base your decision on his answers, reference checks, and your gut feeling.
Good luck!

Sara Denise Reed

Can you do a junior counselor kid of thing? The camps I have worked at have done that esp if the person was younger but went through cit. They had limited duties and other restrictions.

Christopher Colahan

Thank you all for your feedback! The young man was a well liked camper, but received overall sub-par reviews as a CIT. Specifically, many counselors said his orientation was still more of a camper. Everyone thinks he's a good person, but we all know counselors are exceptional, more mature than their peers, etc. Having no knowledge of his disability we would not hire him, but having built a relationship with him and his family he's not someone I want to give up on, especially when I think he may just need some more support (as some of you said). Thank you for all the suggestions!

Natalie King

Does participation in your CIT program guarantee employment the following summer? I love when we can hire CITs but if they have completed the program and I don't feel that they would be a quality staff member, I don't hire them. There is a difference between a kid in your program who you are developing and a staff you have hired to work for your camp. Hopefully there is some overlap, but they have to be separate.

Ben Forbes

christopher Give him the chance. have someone work with him all summer because i think no matter what spectrum people are in they deserve a chance to work at a summer camp because it is such a positive thing for everyone and will change him for the rest of his life.

Lauren Weinberg

There must be something that this camper excels at that would be a good fit for them at your camp. We have had a few scenarios like that at the camp I work at and the directors usually hire the staff to work in a specialty capacity at an activity instead of as a counsellor. This tends to alleviate some of the concerns about them being the sole supervisor of campers or having to be engaged 100% of the time and provides the staff member with an optimal environment within the camp to succeed.

Mike Judd

camp is about the campers

Kelly Gilhooly

Great plan Melissa Gail Banks. I agree. Give him a special position to which he can succeed at!

Natalie King

I'm surprised to see so many responses about trying to find a way to hire this person. I LOVE when I can hire former campers. But there comes a time when a camper grows up and I am no longer "youth developing" them and I have to evaluate them as an employee. If someone is not up to doing a quality job, they don't get hired. It's sad to say goodbye to a former camper, because I want to see all of our kids succeed. But isn't camp about the campers and making sure they are safe and having a great time? Why would I ever hire someone who has had "sub par" evaluations and leadership doesn't feel is up to the responsibility?

Mike Judd

exactly...did not say it so well, but that is what I meant. More than once I have not hired a CIT to be on staff.

Mike Douglass

Some kids are good for camps, and some kids camp is good for them.

Catherine Gorecki

If this person needs more attention, let them be a CIT again. I've had several campers, both on and not on the spectrum, who needed more coaching. Why not give him the same opportunities as other kids, and offer him another year to get his feet wet?

Sean Gundersen

I would interview and if he doesn't meet the requirements of the position then don't offer it. If the person meets the requirements offer them the job. It is about his abilities and has nothing to do with his disability.

Colette Marquardt

I have been in a similar situation and I held fast and hired her. I created a role that would help her thrive while also filling a need for the camp. She is now a conference speaker, supervisor at a resident camp, and greatly respected by our camp peers. Lots of people had doubts but I believed she had something to give. I find it interesting that when it comes to the campers, we as a community are very inclusive but not when it comes to staff. The campers get a lot out of seeing themselves in staff - including staff with specific needs.

Luke Bouma

If he is not right for counselor what if you offer him a support job? Maybe he just wants to work at camp. Kitchen, Maintenance, etc could be a great job for me.

Jennifer H. Selke

We run a teen program people pay for to get coaching so they can be in the counselor training programs with a job coach.
<http://camps.berkeley.edu/camps-by-activity/social-skills-camp/social-skills-teen-camp/>

Does anyone have or had experience with the Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) certification program?

Jenn Macios

Yes, I have. What kind of questions do you have?

Pat Boyd

Hi Jenn, I sent you a PM, Check your "Other" folder.....

Dave Hennessey

Jenn Macios, can you tell us about it? How did you get it, what was the program like, what benefits have you seen from it?

Roger Barkman

There is a study guide

Leslie Ann Vohs

I'd like to know more as well

Jenn Macios

The CPRP certificate is for those individuals who wish to work within the Park and Recreation field. Those candidates who possess a CPRP are given first consideration when applying for positions. There are several Universities whose Recreation Programs are accredited through NRPA. Once you graduate, you have one year to sit for the exam. There are some qualifications to sit through the exam if you did not go through an accredited program with the NRPA. You must have so much work experience before being allowed to take the exam. In order to qualify, you must submit your work experience for them to approve your experience. The CPRP is really designed to test your knowledge in the field of recreation, parks, and leisure. While so many people think this is fairly common knowledge, there is quite a bit of difference between common knowledge and how NPRA program teaches someone about the information. For example, NPRA has the 10 steps for a program guide. They exam covers everything from theories to programs, finance to operations, and human resources. Its a fairly intense test. Even those who have been in the accredited programs have struggled with the test. I suggest if you are interested that you invest in the study guide and practice exam. Once you pass the exam, you have to obtain so many CEU's every year to remain valid. If you let a year lapse then you have to resit for the exam. Once you have earned your certificate and have been in the field of Parks and Rec, you can qualify for the CPRE if you are in a management position. The CPRE signifies that you are a mastery level. I hope this info helps. If you have any other questions, just ask.

Robert Snow

do you have to re-certify, or is a one time certification?

Jenn Macios

If you obtain the required CEU's every year then your certification stays current. If you let it lapse by not obtaining CEU's then you have to take the test again. In the past, I have used some of the ACA courses for CEU but you want to make sure to check that they count before assuming

My client (a linen company) has 6,000 new small towels in inventory that he's selling at a deep discount (\$1.95 each). They're 20"x42." Please PM me at nancys@theonswitch.com and, if you're interested, I'll put you in touch. (You don't need to purchase all of them. :))

Kayla Ryan

I'm interested :) thanks for posting! kayla@bravetrails.org

Nancy A. Shenker

How many do you need, Kayla?

Joel Van Egbert

Seth Oglesby

Kayla Ryan

Nancy A. Shenker 10 would be great :)

A great, quick read from Jack Schott on the Go Camp Pro blog - particularly relevant if you are making an online marketing push right now, or will be creating camp videos this summer!

<https://www.gocamp.pro/parents-dont-read-and-what-to-do-about-it/>

Adrienne Sipkovsky

You totally know what we're up to, James. ;-)

James Davis

We try! Though hat tip to Jack for knowing what you're up to, in this case!

Jack Schott

Thanks for sharing James Davis!

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Totally just used these tips to revamp my parent email. Thanks!!

Quick question- we are hiring an individual who is here on a student visa...how do I go about obtaining the proper background checks if she is international?

Sandy Rubenstein

Have the candidate request a police report from their home town. This is what the agencies require them to do to obtain the visa.

Kelly Ariel Yewer

Often student visa's have strict rules about whether or not they can work on them. If they want to work typically they require another type of visa (Such as a J1) and then they can get a background police check from their home country

Whitney Winston

^and typically to obtain the right visa for work, they have to return home first. A normal student visa doesn't allow them to work.

Laura Fuese Hall

Our state (MD) requires state and FBI checks for all, so we collect the police check AND conduct all of the checks that our US staff complete.

Lori Rosene

We require home country police reports and still do the FBI and state checks here. If he was a student here he has been here long enough to warrant a background check here. Ditto on the no pay for work on a student visa. Their status as a student could be jeopardized.

Colleen McGourley

Hey Jessica. Some student F1 visas allow them to stay and work however I believe it normally has to be a job related to the major they are studying. If they are allowed to work they would of had to get a background check to get their F1 visa. Ask the applicant for a copy. I believe to get one they have to be in their home country. Also there is normally a form your have to sign to prove that they are working at your camp. I had to do a few years ago and they were able to as they were studying a coaching related degree and taught basketball for us.

Victoria Hoppes

In PA now we have to do both state and federal background checks, regardless of whether they have lived in PA or not. This includes our international staff.

Thought I'd pass this along. Colorado Camp Leader Position from a great organization.
www.connectusnow.org

Any feedback from users on: www.campschedules.com? We'd be looking to use it for about 3000 people at camp at the same time.

Jon Shelton

Hey Jen Dundas!
It's a product that I created with a few other CampPro's based on what we were looking for and couldn't find. I use it to schedule our camp (about 70 cabin groups) at a time. If you're interested in a demo send me an email jon@shelton.ca or give me a call. It's priced to basically just cover the development costs and any small software updates users request.

Will Shelton

Does anyone have a recommendation for software to manage elective signups and schedules? We run 3 elective periods per week.

Administrators, HR, camps, feel free to post your openings and special jobs on this page, its a gathering place for those seeking a position. and those looking for help. (in its infancy, but i believe it could serve a need)

Carrie Wilson

Great!

Vanessa Grose

Following

David Peterson

How will it work as a closed group?

Tony Sedgman

click "join group" and the administrator adds you. I personally think it provides a better container for a groups purpose rather than being completely public, though in this case I'm not sure, so good point. It seems to be serving the purpose. Then its helpful when it travels among those with that common interest, rather than in the larger public arena.....

Karen Kittelson

Swim&Gym; Summer Camp is hiring a full time counselor. Karen@swimwest.com for more information. In Madison,WI. West side.

Anne Deane Berman

Overnight Camp Demigod (Camp Half-Blood and Camp Fandom) is hiring a full time counselor, ages 18+ We are located 30 minutes south of Vancouver, BC and 2.5 hours north of Seattle, WA. Room, Board, Stipend (for 10 weeks). www.campdemigod.org

We are in search of the ULTIMATE Assistant Camp Director
at JCC Camp By the Sea in Margate, NJ

<https://jerseyshore.craigslist.org/edu/4947762827.html>

So we just found out our insurance company will not cover our Camp in a Van program underage drivers (18-19 years old, driving their own cars to the off site locations - not driving any campers, just themselves and one or two staffers and the supplies for a week. Besides Markel and Church Mutual, any suggestions? THANKS!

Dan Lichtenstein

K&K;

Brendan Vaughan

Drivers that are 21

Nate Cook

Try Brotherhood Mutual or Redwoods Group

Sarah Jacobs Resch

West Bend Mutual

Bill Waite

If they are driving their own cars, they should be under their own insurance.

Rich Swartwood

The non-owned/leased clause gets our insurance involved.

James Ralston

If you qualify Church Mutual is great

Richard Simpson

We rent a mini van and have another mini van we own that our insurance covers - then we have someone on our insurance (often myself or the second team leader) as well - the staff travel together with all the supplies and stay in the community and use the unloaded mini van to drive to and from site each day. Not sure how helpful this information is but thought i would share with you

Mike Judd

Brotherhood.

James Davis

Church Mutual was a disaster for me. Unequivocally would not recommend them based on my interactions.

Guide One was for more responsive, helpful, and accountable.

Anna Charlotte

In the UK you can upgrade your personal car insurance to cover work use for free

Rich Swartwood

We are using guide one. They are the ones saying they can't insure our drivers.

James Davis

Ah, too bad. Sorry, Rich Swartwood.

Deb Krueger

Check in with Morrow Insurance. We just switched to them for ALL of our camp insurance. Based out of NC. We were with Church Mutual...Morrow has a lot more coverage for a better price. Dealing with Church Mutual has been awful in many ways.

Colette Marquardt

What about K&K;?

David Gill

Brotherhood for us too.

Kristen Parkin

We require any staff driving campers or other staff for work purposes to be 21

Hi Folks - anyone with experience of the tax implications/processes for international counselors whose brain I could pick? Thanks...

Rosemary Pezzuto

Check with camp america

Matt Henry

Thanks Rosemary - their information seems to be designed to be the minimum that they can say without getting involved (accurate but minimal). I need some thoughts more on the processing and such a few steps down the line.

Adam Delezenne

We've had to figure that out before. I'm not sure exactly what research went into this but our policy was that we had to take out taxes because that's what we do for everyone. It is then up to the employee to file at the end of the year and get it back. I don't like this because it puts the onus on a young adult to navigate a foreign country's tax process. Who cuts your paychecks? If you use a payment processor they might have some insight.

Matt Henry

Adam, that was to be our approach, which I dislike for the same reason. But some other reading suggests that they would get taxed at a higher rate, which is worse. We're trying to do this more legit than in years past....

Adam Delezenne

I've had a couple contact me recently asking what to do with their W2s. I told them to check with their agency. Do you remember how it worked for you when you were at Westminster? Or was that avoided because of how camp america works?

Matt Henry

That was so long ago I can't remember. :)

Adam Delezenne

Wow, you must be old or something

Matt Henry

I know. I wasn't paying attention, it just happened.

Adam Delezenne

James Davis, Andy Rosenhauch, any insight?

Andy Rosenhauch

Sorry, not my speciality

James Davis

I'd imagine that most of the employees would qualify as exempt, but can't be 100% certain. Camping hero Jeff Daly from international staffing outfit 3 Adventures is going to be the man I pass the hot potato over to next!

Jeff Daly

Provided that in-hand earnings do not exceed the personal exemption of \$3,900 in the current tax year, there is no tax liability and therefore participants should not have tax withheld if they earn less than \$3,900.

If there is any tax deducted, you should issue a W-2 at the end of the year so he/she can file a 1040NR, if necessary

Matt Henry

Thanks Jeff. That's what I assumed, but our accountant is not quite seeing it that way... so I was seeking some support/guidance. Appreciate this.

Jeff Daly

If Int'l tax exceed the above threshold of revenue or are inadvertently taxed by a camp's payroll dept, we also have an account with taxback.com and send info to our int'l staff, they can fill out the W-2 info and the site guides them through how to claim a refund if applicable. Works pretty well based on feedback from the int'l staff too.

Matt Henry

Cool, thanks Jeff. We won't be breaking the threshold with our folks, but good to know.

James Davis

Jeff Daly dropping knowledge. BOOM!

James Davis

3 adventurers is my personal recommendation for all things international staff, for what it's worth. Jeff & Co. really know their stuff, and seem to have the top screen process in the biz.

Matt Buczek

Hey all. I'm going to be pedantic with my co-worker, Jeff.

Provided in hand earnings do not exceed the personal exemption of \$3,950 in the current tax year, there is no tax liability. Each Staff should still complete a W4 Etc.

I do realize that the word of a couple of guys online may not satisfy your HR depts or payroll companies, so....(and this is the boring part)

The ruling is formalized under NOTICE 2005-77, 2005-46 IRB, Page 951 (available from www.irs.gov/pub/irs-irbs/irb05-46.pdf.)

It is also summarized on page 3 of the 2013 IRS Tax Form 1040NR-EZ. (Instructions www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i1040nre.pdf)

Theres the links to give to your folks that are resistant!

Hope it helps!

Matt Henry

Awesome. thx.

TaLii Towels ! A super absorbant , antibacterial , quick dry , compact , microfiber towel in 14 great Colors.

You won't find anything like this , because I brought it to North America myself. (@Not with the color choices and the sizes) . As a camper's mom - her name is Talia - I swear by my product ! One weeks use and it doesn't stink ! It can be washed in the sink at camp and will dry as soft as it was out of your dryer. My daughter makes me laugh when she says. "Mom , I can always see my towel on the beach from the lake , so I know where to swim when I'm Getting out. There is never any time (to dilly dally) they make us run from swimming to the ropes course , I wrap myself in my TaLii and I'm dry , then by the time I get to ropes my towel is dry. "

From the mouth of a camp kid !

Www.Taliitowels.com.

Eric Shendelman

Incredible towel and amazing for advertising your business. I just bought a load for my swim school and the kids and parents love them. Super absorbant, easy to pack and fun.

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

A few samples.

Maria Horner

Wendel Roth-Strong...five year gift?

Lisa Gattoni lafrate

Hi Wendel. I just sent you an email. It's a great idea ??

Wendel Roth-Strong

Awesome! Thanks for replying to me so quickly!

Hey Camp Pros! Do any of your camps have an internship program? I would love to hear about your structure and recruitment methods!

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Following!

Sarah Jacobs Resch

We have a lot of staff that do their internships at camp. MOST of them are just an hour requirement and a final evaluation. Usually the intern comes to me with their requirements and we figure out together if one of our positions will work. In most cases we have made it work! We have such a wide range of majors that people want to do internships in, so creating an "intern" job description wouldn't work for us.

Rick Meyering

Sarah, pretty much said exactly how we approach the topic. The leg work on internships are not generally all that much and it tends to benefit both the student and your Camp.

Bubba Mills

Also looking at starting Internship and job descriptions etc...do you provide housing?

Rich Rinaldi

Hey Lynn, we do, email me for info :)

Do you have a type of rental agreement that you use for your onsite staff and for onsite summer workers (college students) who live in dorms?

We are trying to rewrite what we have and would like to compare.

Hi we are opening a summer school in new haven and wondering if anyone has recommendations for insurance providers? We are a UK company so any advice regarding US provider would be great.

Anna Gross

Hi Jen - check out AMSkier - <https://www.amskier.com/>

Jen Munro

Thanks Anna - hope your well. Might give you a shout soon

James Davis

Ian Garner at Markel would take great care of you. Best of luck.

Jen Munro

Thanks James - appreciate it

NLS Waterfront Course (Full & Re-cert) at Bark Lake Leadership Centre June 26-30th. For more details contact me at ropes@barklake.com or 705.447.2447 ext 247

<http://barklake.com/news-events/rope-course-instructor-courses/>

Rafael Cruz says freethinking kids "should be rounded up and placed in special camps to keep them separated from the rest of America." Haha! Solution? Camp Quest! www.campquest.org

Hey YMCA #CampPros! Do you have any skits/games/songs/activities you do with campers to highlight one of the four core values? How do the core values come into play at your camp? What has and has not worked for you in the past?

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Bumping this because I know someone out there HAS to have the answers I need!

Alicia Bentley

We used the bead system. Counselors were responsible to hand out beads to their cabins and we were flexible of how they could do it. Most of the counselors would use a core value as their cabin vespers and would hand out the bead that night for the camper to add to their bracelet. Some would give out the beads when a camper demonstrated a value. By the end of the week, the campers would have all the beads and know the meaning of each one.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

We're going to try something similar this summer! I've developed a bead program that, in addition to highlighting the core values, also celebrates achievement (like moving up a level in swimming or getting to the top of the rock wall), other positive behaviors, and special events (Birthdays, etc.). We're even going to have a Super Reader bead to go along with the Camp Readers program!

Last summer we tried core values stickers (I found a set out at camp behind a bunch of junk in a drawer that were ancient... definitely not brand compliant at all... shhhh... don't tell) and while they were a definite motivator for some kids, I think something like beads, which can be displayed all week long and which aren't going to fall off on the bus ride home, will be more meaningful.

Do you folks do any values related activities with the kids at your morning meeting?

YMCA friends -- anyone have an example of a brand compliant award certificate that you are particularly proud of?

Elisa DayCamp

I think I used a template from the Exchange last summer. Proud? Not really but compliant!

Laura Petersen

Following

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Last summer I threw one together and ran it past our Brand Advocate Director. It wasn't exciting, but it was compliant and it did the job. This year I'm ordering some from YShop.biz - http://secure.sportsawardsonline.com/applications/yshop/store/index.asp?product_category_id=130

If you don't need them en masse, then it's a good option. But if you're looking for 100s of them then this might not be the best option for you.

We are looking for a dinner cook. Our camp is in Northern California, 120 kids is our max, and we have housing for the cook. If you know of someone interested they can DM me or sent an email to fun@mountainmeadow.com.

We are also looking for camp nurses. We trade camp sessions for there kids while they are our camp nurse/doctor. fun@mountainmeadow.com.

Or if you know of any resources where we can advertise for camp nurses let me know. We lost a big chunk of them this last summer because there kids aged out of camp. Thanks!

New FB group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/373951909466490/> - for those seeking and/or hiring for Camp jobs.

Does anyone have an Aqua treadmill? (See pic). We have the chance to acquire one but we don't know anything about the maintenance needs or safety standards.

Mary M Siniard

We don't have one, but these are on sale at Sam's Club right now!

Dave Hennessey

Michael for the shallows!

Calder Cheverie

I've worked with them in Ontario. Biggest maintenance is set-up, take-down and storage. The one I worked with became ripped in it's second year -- not from kids bouncing but from improper storage (in storage basement with cement floors. Staff were tasked with setting it up and it ripped while being dragged).

Fishing through my 2014-2103 deleted emails for applicants from past years to contact about open positions this year. Anyone else ever do this? lol

Grego Dow

Maybe I'm alone in this or just desperate. haha

Ben Smoky Radley

I'm calling around to camp buddies in the region to see if they have extra applicants they would refer to us.

ie, last summer a fellow ohio camp had more qualified male applicants (crazy right?) than they needed, and referred some to me, which I then hired. I've gotten some top quality staff this way, folks who just decided to do the camp thing late in the hiring season.

Benjamin Esposito

Time to get some database management software.

Kelcey Bajc

Ben Smoky Radley We could use some more male applicants this year (no surprise), so if you have extra.....send them our way please! :)

Ben Smoky Radley

3 more spaces to fill, then sure thing Kelcey Bajc!

Charles Giegerich

Anyone need international staff. Either program or support staff let me know

Sara Denise Reed

Last I knew we needed a life guard a head cook and a food assitant.

Charles Giegerich

EmAil me if you have any staffing needs Charles@acawe.com

Hey, Pros. I'm looking for some help from those of you that manage other year round, full-time camp pros. I'm hoping that there are people out there that might be willing to share with me examples of their review and evaluation process for providing useful and constructive feedback. We all provide evaluation to our seasonal staff but what about when it comes to other full-time directors? Please send me a message your thoughts and/or templates. Thanks!

We have a few unique leadership positions still open for this summer. Looking for Health Officers and an Outdoor Cook for the whole summer (7-8 weeks commitment mid June through early August). Training for Health Officers is provided here prior to all staff training. The Outdoor Cook is responsible for cooking for 50-60 in an outdoor kitchen (gas stoves and running water accessible). Most food is prepped in our main kitchen and then grilled/heated prior to the meal. Both are really great positions, just not what "camp" applicants are typically looking for. Please help me spread the word about these amazing opportunities!

We also have both male and female counselor positions open!

A little about us:

CYO Camp, situated among 216 acres of coastal redwood trees, is an awe-inspiring place that enables campers to experience a positive, meaningful and challenging summer adventure. Located sixty miles north of San Francisco near the historic town of Occidental, CYO Camp has been providing summer camp to youth of the Bay area for over sixty years.

Emily Ordway
CYO Camp Program Coordinator
Eordway@catholiccharities.org

<http://camp.cccyo.org/staff/>

Hello! We're researching registration systems and are curious how much camps pay for theirs, including whether there is tiered pricing, by the head pricing, etc. Thanks for any help!

In California there is no group that regulates summer DAY camps. No laws requiring camps conduct background checks or require CPR/First Aid.

What state are you in and do you have any such laws?

Also - Do you think it is necessary to have a law about this or do you think it is safe to assume that every day camp would do this even if there was no such law?

Luke Bouma

That is why you should send kids to camps that are apart of the ACA or programs like YMCA. They already require the background checks. etc.

Kim Summers-Everett

Oregon does not govern day camps either.

Matt Henry

Michigan has a licensing program through the state. "Assume" and "background checks" don't really sit together well in a sentence. Irresponsible for camps not to do so.

Kevin O'Sullivan

We are regulated by our state, Michigan, so we do it all. But I have to say if you don't do these things you are opening yourself and your organization up to a serious lawsuit that no insurance company I am familiar with will pay out.

It's our responsibility to do this. We should not have to ask, 'is there a law?'

Rick Doucette

Massachusetts here, DPH enacted regulations in 1994. Was controversial at the time, but has made an incredibly positive difference in rising the tide to lift all camps.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Maine here - DHHS licenses day camps.

Jeff Benincosa

In PA we have to have the child abuse, State Police and FBI clearness. Most camp have their staff trained in first aid CPR and even Basic wilderness training. And of Course lifeguard

Amy Edith

In NJ we follow the camp safety act which has rules for both overnight and day camp that are fairly rigorous. Our Y also has separate policies to follow as well in terms of background checks, sexual offenders etc.

Melanie Towle

RI doesn't regulate camps either. Count your blessings and get your camp accredited by the American Camp Association!

Ruth Cassidy

For Boys & Girls Clubs ALL staff camp or not are background checked, finger printed & drug tested! Even if they are staff returning every summer.

Casey Sukeforth

Our day camp is regulated by the DOH (department of health) in NYS

David Allen-Hughes

I agree that ACA accreditation is definitely a step in the right direction but in reality they don't verify all staff are background checked or have CPR/first aid...it's just a random "spot check" of one employee.

Interesting how many states are involved in ensuring the safety of their kids. I'm not a huge fan of government oversight but for safety and child protection it certainly makes sense to me!

Heather Slimp

Our camps are located in CA, and because we operate year-round we are licensed through CA Department of Social Services. The license does require background checks through FBI and DOJ. There are policies in place for health and safety standards and care-but it does not require all staff to be certified in CPR/first aid. It does require water safety certification for any staff supervising children in water. Our organization does require CPR/First Aid/Medication Distribution training as an extra step in care.

CA SB-443 does include regulations on criminal background checks under SEC. 4 -Section 18897.1 (c) (1) (A) . But does not require CPR/First Aid.

I think that any quality camp program will include criminal background checks and a variety of safety trainings because it self regulates based on state policies and accreditation standards as a way to provide the best care and supervision to campers.

Kathy Kisa Lyons-Frumoff

I am in Florida. Very strict regulations and level 2 background checks are required by the state.

Lori Rosene

David Allen-Hughes In addition to the background checks as mentioned above.... in the Organized Camping Regulations kind of does require the Health Supervisor to be CPR/First Aid certified. The Regulation requires that you have a Physician, RN, LVN OR training in Pediatric First Aid and CPR plus the CA Child Care Preventive Health and Safety course. Also the CA requires training in 1st Aid and CPR...It does not specify certification. RN's are generally certified in CPR but are not usually certified in First Aid.

Lori Rosene

@ David. I just made the comment because it sounded like the CPR/First Aid and background checks were not a part of the code even for overnight camps.

David Allen-Hughes

Good point Lori! :)

Hey team!

I'm struggling with recruiting/hiring this year & could use some fresh ideas.

WHEN am I hiring? Spring, training starts 3/30 & fall training starts 9/7

WHO am I hiring? Graduates, outdoor educators/professionals.

WHERE have I already posted? Outdoored.com, NOLS alumni job board, universities, ACA year round positions.

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Someone suggested ski resorts. You're not too far from Massanutten - they might have qualified folks wrapping up their winter season.

Katie Greenwell

Start with the folks you know:-)! They could be your best recruiters. Visit them, meet their friends. Also, social media through folks you know. Whip up a good pic with minimal text, get your people to post it with a personal touch. And call me if that doesn't make sense!

Phylicia Fawn Sheehy

Ecojobs

Johnny Ford

What positions do you have open? I may be looking for a job for the summer...maybe for longer. I have over 25 years in YMCA camps as a camper, counselor, and director. I have also worked as program staff and maintenance as a full time resident camp employee.

No need to say, but I love the camp environment. If you are interested, let me know what you think.

*I am in Florida, however, I plan on relocating by the summer.

Ange Atkinson

Can I get your info - email, job description? I have a staff member that is graduating and job hunting in the industry.

Joe Sprengle

email outdoor clubs of local colleges with applicable programs? possibly see if you can set up recruitment tables in student union buildings?

Morgan Tebeau

tebeaum@horizonsva.com 540-896-7600
@Ange Atkinson please have them get in touch! Thanks

Tony Sedgman

is there a Facebook group for those seeking positions? That could be a nice benefit for both the seeker and the camps..... a few camps have an individual recruiting page, but i don't see a page that a pool of prospective hires could use as a resource.

Tony Sedgman

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/373951909466490/>
I've started this group. Feel free to post your openings here/ info on application process,

and I'll make it available in networks of potential employees....

Chris Smith

A few other online sites: AEE, backdoorjobs, & NAAEE.

Friends plz kindly pass this along, colleagues of mine who own a summer camp just outside Charlotte, NC are looking for a tennis specialist for the summer. This is a sleepaway camp. If you know someone who is perfect for this job, please have them email me direct abberger@primarywave.com.

** They are also looking for some other specific positions so if you have college aged kids or older in need of summer work, send them my way. Please also share this at will.

In case someone wants to try this at camp...

Laura Polis

ha! one of our counselors posted this to a leadership team member's wall today!

Drew FlynnDavis

Gayle, Mike?!

Alison Stoehner

Love it!!!

Nick Green

Jess Shaker

Hannah Terpstra

This is a favourite youth group game for us! It works well with balloons and just grabbing your own color when you go in!

Bob Terpstra

Awesome game! True story, one of our old leaders created this game years ago!

Jon Shelson

Does anyone do this on an outdoor basketball court? We're just thinking of skinned knees and things like that?

Phillip Hollecker

Jon, if you did that what about having them lay on a skateboard?

Hi everyone. I will be directing a one week free camp this summer for boys who have lost a parent, sibling or close loved one. I am reaching out to everyone to ask for your help to spread the word and help me recruit more campers to experience this amazing program this summer. Any questions just let me know.

Does anyone have a campout protocol they would be willing to share? We do overnight camp outs on our property a few times a week. The campers sleep in traditional tents, enjoy s'mores and campfire songs and then staff make breakfast in the morning over the campfire. Just looking for some basic procedures for such activities (already searched and checked out the files...)! Thanks!

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Following

Robert Lawton

Marshmallows - a long standing favorite - also known as "napalm on a stick".

Jennie Quinn

We have a similar program at Appel Farm Art Camp, and I am happy to share resources. Send me a message, and I'll send over some PDFs!

Kendray Elizabeth Rodriguez

Jennie - just sent you a message (check your "other" box).

Carly Robinson

Remind me in pm to send you ours later this week...

Carole Peguiron

Would you share with me as well? Thanks

Robert Lawton

I like the BSA's "Leave No Trace" principles: http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/TeachingLeaveNoTrace/064_principles.aspx

Michael Laro

I would love to see any resources that are being shared as well. Great question!

Robert Lawton

Stuff I enjoyed doing as a camper:

- fire starting competitions
- team tent erecting challenges (blindfolded, etc)
- plant & animal identification
- common first aid for camping
- a conservation or area improvement project
- star charting
- journal writing
- cooking
- gadget building
- orienteering/geocaching
- safety briefings/instruction/training (fire, knife, axe/saw, weather)
- story telling, songs, skits
- art projects:
 - - sand candles
 - - plaster molds
 - - painting
 - - collages from natural materials
 - - building a nature-powered machine that creates art
 - - wind chimes
 - - mandalas

I'm sure there's tons more, and maybe some of these ideas will trigger all new ideas of your own.

Seasonal/Residential - NY

YMCA Camp Weona is in search of a Ropes Course Director.

Minimum requirements: 21+, CPR-Pro and First Aid certified, and previous ropes course experience

Check out our website to learn more about us!

<http://www.ymcabuffaloniagara.org/weona/employment.html>

Applications and resumes to Gregg Houck, Program Director, at ghouck@ymcabn.org.
