



**UNITED YOUTH CAMPS**

# **Camp Counselor's Manual**

(From Camp Heritage)

Revised: 5/19/2005



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## INTRODUCTION

The United Church of God sponsors summer camps for our youth. These camps are designed to challenge, stimulate and encourage the young people to experience a well-balanced program of activities and learn new and interesting skills. In so doing, confidence is built and the personality and character of the individual grow.

Through their daily involvement in the many facets of camper experience, our young people have a marvelous opportunity to learn that God's way of life really works! They see it in action every day—in the activities, in their Dorms, in the examples of the staff, and in the way the camp operates.

The staff have a vital role to play in the effectiveness of the program. A staff member must at all times strive to be a sterling example of God's way of life. As a staff member, you are a representative of God's way at camp.

In teaching an activity or working in a service department, the standards of the staff will be viewed as the standards of God's way. Strive to be clear, simple and encouraging, like God's Word, and do it "with your might" and with a positive and cheerful attitude, in an exciting, challenging, and fun-filled atmosphere.

The following information is designed to help you more effectively fulfill your role as a counselor at camp.

## THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE

Of all the staff at camp, no one has the level of contact or impact on a camper's life as that of a Counselor. A Counselor lives with his or her campers, guiding and leading them every day. While each Counselor has his or her own style, all must have the same commitment to upholding God's Law, encouraging and developing the young people, and showing loyalty and support for the camp administration.

Yours is an awesome responsibility, one you cannot fulfill alone. You need the support of your assistant, the counsel of those in charge of the camp, and the advice and support of the other staff. Don't try to "go it alone." We all need to work together as a team in order to give the campers the best time possible. The Counselor/Assistant Counselor are positions that complement each other. The two are to help one another by providing different perspectives as well as abilities. While the Counselor has the final say in any decision, there should always be a "thinking out loud" process that both Counselors go through in order to know what each other is thinking. This avoids any "surprises." With the two working together as a team, the Dorm will respect both individuals while still being able to see the proper workings of relationships.

Your greatest support while at camp is from God. Don't let counseling take you away from this most important relationship. Strive to take advantage of available personal time for prayer and Bible Study. This "sharing" of time will help each Counselor start the day right and will provide the campers with a positive example as well.

## THE ASSISTANT COUNSELOR

Each Counselor will have an Assistant. The Assistant's role is to back up the Counselor in everything the Dorm does. He or she must reflect the same high standards and example as the Counselor. The Assistant is not an "alternative" to the Counselor, but a support.

The Assistant is also in a training capacity and should be given the opportunity to lead the Dorm in various situations. So work as a team in fulfilling your responsibilities and accomplishing your goals.

## PERSONAL COMMENTS FROM COUNSELORS

1. "Schedule a time for *personal prayer and Bible study*. Don't burn out by trying to do it all yourself—you can't. You need God's help and must go to Him for that help daily."
2. "*Be sure to get adequate sleep*. Lack of sleep has traditionally been listed by the staff who have been to camp as the #1 problem. You must manage your time wisely so you stay in peak physical condition. Curtail the late hour "bull sessions" and routine counselings. You are no good to your Dorm half-sleep or running on adrenaline."

3. “Avoid ‘preaching’ to your Dorm. Rather, live God’s way of life and be on everyday example of that way. People would rather see a sermon than hear one.”

### **THE COUNSELOR AND THE CAMPERS**

1. Be an example in dress, grooming, sports, Dining Hall, enthusiasm, interpersonal relationships and general conduct. Actually, you’ll be an example whether you try to be or not—the point is to be a good example.
2. Develop a close personal relationship with each camper. By showing concern, genuine love and understanding in the situations that arise. By building this base with your campers, your job becomes much easier. There is a pact of mutual respect, trust and cooperation between the camper and yourself. Also, if any problems arise, they will feel less hesitation in talking them over with you. Treat each camper with respect.
3. Review the applications for your Dorm. These will give you information on their family and geographical background. At the same time, the name can be associated with the picture. Note: The application and minister’s evaluation are confidential, and are not to be passed around. During camp they will be on file in the Director’s Office.
4. Have something special to welcome the incoming campers, e.g. signs in the Dorm. The Dorms should be clean and neat when they arrive.
5. At least one Counselor must be with the Dorm at all times (except when campers go to selected Evening Activities).
6. Include the campers in planning activities, use their talents, involve them all, seek their input, make them a part of the family. Use older campers to help the younger ones.
7. Feel good about your Dorm and support, encourage, and build up the other Dorms—we’re all part of the same family. We don’t want to establish rivalries. Avoid comparing one Dorm with another.
8. Remember the campers have come from many different backgrounds. When they have difficulty blending in with others in the Dorm, consider their background and home life.
  - a. Give them a little extra encouragement.
  - b. Don’t shun those who aren’t as obedient or responsive as the others; work with them.
  - c. Make them feel like part of the team.
9. If any of your campers are causing problems, see what they wrote on their application (why they wanted to come). Bring that to their attention when talking to them. Also, keep the Counseling Supervisor aware of these problems. They are there to help and support you.

10. Be cautious about the use of nicknames—sometimes they are not very edifying. Encourage first names, or the name they prefer.
11. The first night, you will have Orientation for your Dorm. Work on your Dorm Orientation schedule as you go along. Each session will be different. Plan accordingly using the Counselors' Suggestions as a guide. (See pages 21-24)
12. Suggested guidelines for a Dorm Meeting:
  - a. The meeting should be planned.
  - b. Campers should raise their hands and get permission to speak.
  - c. The meeting should not turn into a long session.
  - d. Make a real effort to keep the meeting to under 30 minutes.
  - e. Don't begin with a play-by-play review of the games your Dorm played that day.
  - f. Don't end on a chew-out or harangue. Keep a positive ending—accomplishments and "high points" of the day, activities and goals for the next day.
13. Subjects like boy/girl relationships, relationships with parents will be discussed with the campers during Christian Living classes. Counselors are encouraged to avoid the emotional roller coaster aspect of campers opening up during Dorm discussions.
14. Encourage the campers to make suggestions, but be sure you approve an idea before they go ahead with it. In their youthful exuberance they sometimes come up with inappropriate ideas. If in doubt, bring it up in the Counselors' Meetings.
15. Campers with similar personalities will inevitably get together. It is the Counselor's responsibility to encourage and provide a variety of associations so that cliques are not considered to be the "in" thing.
16. Hand slapping games should be discouraged. They have an escalation factor that can be very disruptive, especially during Fellowship Time.
17. Counselors need to be aware of what is taking place around you—whistling, wrestling, "shut up"!!
18. If someone brings a water gun, have them check it in at the door.
19. Remind the girls that it is unwise to share make-up. It is a very easy way to spread a number of rashes or infections.
20. On passing notes back and forth: We encourage campers to converse with one another and have discussions. Therefore, we provide ample opportunities for direct fellowship and there is no need for note passing.

21. Thank you notes should be encouraged—especially to those in service areas. In your Dorm Meeting, make a list of those to receive notes. Rather than individual Sabbath notes, involve the entire Dorm.
22. The Counselors must communicate among themselves. If you notice a problem in another Dorm, bring it to the Counselor’s attention. Work together—not counseling the other Dorm, but informing the Counselor. Keep personal matters private and confidential. Don’t bring up a camper’s problem for the whole group to hear.
23. Gifts should not be accepted from or given to campers.
24. Document your Dorm songs (if used) and procedures (relating what is done in the Dorm) to share with future Counselors.

### **Telephone (if applicable)**

1. Counselors should answer the phones, or designate monitors when absent. Have the monitor answer promptly and politely. Give Dorm (ex., Dorm 4G) and name.
2. Don’t tie up the phone with “chit-chat” calls. Make calls for business and keep them short.
3. All camper long-distance calls are to be made collect or credit card. These calls can be made from the Dorm as necessary.
4. Generally, campers should not be using dorm phones after 10:15 at night. Limit these calls to serious matters only.

### **Walking on Campus in Dorms**

1. The Dorms will be doing a lot of walking in getting from one point to another. It is not necessary to walk in lines. However, please give some thought to making this an orderly procedure.
2. At times, one Counselor should be in front and one in the back. At other times both Counselors can be in the back. It’s not a good idea to have both Counselors in the front.
3. Avoid yelling while gathering/lining up. Establish a Dorm signal for gathering/lining up—one whistle, one or two hands in the air, etc. Campers may visit as they go along.
4. Avoid gathering the Dorm together and then having them wait in place for long periods of time, i.e. when they are gathered together, it’s best to be ready to move.
5. One of our traditions is friendliness. Encourage this by having Dorms wave to visitors, greet staff, and greet other Dorms. “Hello, 4G.” “Dorm 2 says ‘Howdy!’” “Hello, Mr. Jacobs!”

6. You may want to develop some Dorm songs and chants when going from one activity to another. Be sure they are uplifting and appropriate. Maintain good standards with regard to Dorm chants and cheers.
7. “Have a happy Sabbath!” Is an appropriate greeting after the last activity class on Friday.
8. No chants or Dorm songs:
  - a. In the morning going to and from breakfast.
  - b. On the Sabbath.
9. **STAY TOGETHER AS A GROUP** *until* the Dorm reaches their destination. Otherwise, you have chaos.
10. Campers and staff should not run from one activity to another on campus, especially up and down steps. Try not to leave your Dorm so late that you must run to make the activity on time. Time yourself so you know how long it takes to get from Point A to Point B.

### **Dress**

1. Sabbath wear is appropriate dress for: Sabbath Services and the Final Banquet. Boys: shirt and tie; girls: skirts/dresses.
2. No ragged shorts are to be worn at any time. Sunglasses should not be worn in the Dining Hall, to indoor classes, or to Sabbath Fellowship Time. They may be worn on the way to an activity, during an outside activity, and on canoe trips.
3. No hats should be worn by boys or girls inside the classrooms or Dining Hall or during Sabbath Fellowship Time.
4. Please remind the campers that shoes must be worn at all times around camp, properly laced and tied. This is a safety matter.
5. Emphasize that offering to loan clothing is not wrong. Taking someone’s clothing without his or her permission is!

### **Homesickness**

Homesickness may be a problem for some as soon as they arrive at camp. Spells of homesickness may be strongest at mealtimes, in the evening, and on the Sabbath. These are relatively inactive times when campers have a good deal of time to think about themselves, which is a key to prevention.

Homesickness has fear as its basis:

1. Fear of new surroundings
2. Fear of strangers

3. Fear of not being accepted
4. Fear of the unknown

How to combat homesickness:

1. Get to know your campers. Spend time with each one and make them feel part of the group. This is a preventative step. If they get homesick, spend more time with them—they want company. Let them talk it out, assuring them we all go through times when we feel homesick. Above all, don't belittle or ignore the camper.
2. Be aware of the possibility of homesickness, particularly the first day or two.
3. Keep them busy so their minds will not be on themselves.
  - a. CI around the Dorm
  - b. Visiting and meeting other campers
  - c. Informal talks in the Dorm
  - d. Tour of Campus
  - e. Responsibility—bulletin board, walks
  - f. Helping other people
4. You may want to let a homesick camper call home.
5. If a camper says he/she wants to go home, give a challenge to stay for another day, or until after the canoe trip, or sailing. This should be discussed with an administrator.

### **Neatness and Cleanliness**

1. Campers are responsible for keeping their Dorms neat and clean. Avoid being overly meticulous and picky.
2. Develop some Dorm guidelines and routines for performing this responsibility. Discuss the necessity for having the Dorm neat and clean—pride, high standards, good feeling, etc. Stress the team effort and formulate some motivational techniques to get the job done.
3. Clothes should be on hangers in the closet, or may be stored in a suitcase under the bed.
4. Cash or valuables should be given to the Counselor. **NO MONEY SHOULD BE LEFT LOOSE IN THE DORM!** Some campers may not be able to handle that situation.
5. A table may be set up outside the Dining Hall for general “Lost and Found” items. Dorms should periodically inspect the table after lunch. More valuable items—cameras, watches, athletic shoes, etc.—will be in the director's office.

## THE COUNSELOR AND THE ACTIVITY PROGRAM

One of your major goals is to help the campers have an educational, exciting, and profitable experience. The camp activities have been set up to give each camper as much excitement, challenge, and skill development as possible. Work toward having your campers experience real fun and happiness! To help achieve this goal, give proper attention to the details of the Daily Activity Schedule so the camper can make the most of each day and each class period. The key is to be organized.

1. Post the daily schedule for the campers to see.
2. Study your schedule:
  - a. Write in times
  - b. Circle time or days
  - c. Underline activities
  - d. Plan for non-scheduled time
3. Inform the Program and Activities Coordinator of any problems or conflicts in the schedule. The Counselors' Meeting is the best time to work this out.
4. At least one of the Counselors must be with the Dorm at all times (except for Fellowship Time when you will take turns as monitor for the group). This provides stability for the Dorm, and confidence and a secure feeling for the campers. You may also be needed to assist in class instruction. After station work or the first class, there might be a time when only one Counselor is needed. The other may then have time off. (Arrange this during Counselors' Meeting, not on your own.)
5. Be on time! Make sure you are ready, and have your Dorm ready to leave for an activity on time.
6. Sell the program! Be enthusiastic about the activities and get the campers excited about them. Build anticipation; plan for each activity. Let them know that each activity is beneficial although maybe not as "fun" as others.
7. On rainy days, the Program and Activities Coordinator may cancel an activity. Check with Program Coordinator. Cancellations are based on individual activities for both morning and afternoon. Though the outside activity may be canceled, the class will most likely be held in another location to go over rules, strategy, fundamentals, etc. There will always be a Plan B or Plan C.
8. It is the Counselors' responsibility to go to Department Heads concerning the conduct/example of the high school staff.
9. Try getting involved in each activity—playing, coaching, or assisting the instructors—but don't take away from the participation of the campers. Set the example of involvement

without showing off or dominating. Remember to point the campers' attention and respect toward the activity staff.

10. If one of your campers needs special attention, let the staff know and they will give some extra personal attention. The program is designed to work that way.
11. Be aware of what is taking place around you in activities, such as:
  - a. Throwing softball gloves
  - b. Walking to position in softball
  - c. Putting others under water in windsurfing
  - d. Pulling others off windsurfing boards
12. The Counselor should stay behind after an activity if there is to be a verbal evaluation.
13. Make a daily "To Do List."

### **Daily Activities**

1. Some campers have a fear of water. None should be forced to go into the water.
2. No jewelry, rings, chains, watches are to be worn while participating in sports. All jewelry should be left back at the Dorm when going to class. If not, give personal effects to your Counselor.
3. In camps with a gym all campers should have proper socks and gym shoes for volleyball and basketball classes. The shoes should also be laced. Have shoes changed, jackets and sweatshirts off, and jewelry removed before coming.
4. During the first basketball/volleyball class, the Counselor and Assistant go through the stations with their campers to help build morale and Dorm unity, and to get the Dorm fired up.
5. During volleyball and basketball games—be seated. Don't roam the sidelines yelling instructions to the players.
6. You may like the idea of having a short cheer or song for the staff when an activity is over.
7. Take a Bible, notebook, and pen to Christian Living class.
8. It is helpful for campers to have name cards (first names only) in front of them on the desk during Christian Living classes.
9. Some camps may have designated Fellowship Time and designated areas for Fellowship Time. This may be for 30-45 minutes after lunch or dinner, or perhaps as part of the evening activities. Fellowship Time works best when it has a definite starting point and ending point,

e.g., after lunch until 1:15 is Fellowship Time on the grass in front of the Dining Hall. It helps to explain in orientation that Fellowship Time is for the purpose of meeting new people. Encourage campers to meet the staff and other campers from around the country. At least one counselor from each dorm must be in the fellowship area at all times during scheduled Fellowship Time. They are to ensure that friendly visiting takes place without distracting behavior.

10. Different activity staff members will evaluate the Dorms in different ways. Therefore, each evaluation that is given to the Counselor should be a guide—to assist you in giving whatever direction is needed to the Dorm. If there is time the activity head or appointed staff member may give the Counselor a verbal evaluation.
11. Point of Emphasis: Each camper should experience a measure of success every day—in sports, in the classroom, in the Dorm, in personal responsibilities, growth, or improvement.

### **Evening Activities**

1. The evening activities will vary at each camp. They can be used for Dorm games and individual participation. Recreational activities may include volleyball, basketball, softball, swimming, sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, all-terrain biking, archery, riflery, photography, water polo, etc. Counselors should plan to participate in one or more activities. At times, you may be asked to help the regular staff in supervising an activity. A new schedule can be in effect each day and a sheet can be provided for individual sign-ups.
2. If not properly explained, Evening Activities can be mistakenly viewed as “free time” or “party time.” Evening Activities are scheduled class activities. When a camper signs up for a certain Evening Activity, he or she goes to that activity and remains there with the class until the activity is over. The campers stay in the activity they have chosen.
3. Girls who like to go jogging should not jog alone.
4. Sample Evening Activity Schedule:

7:15 — Evening Activities begin  
8:15 — Evening Activities end  
8:30 - 9:00 — Fellowship Time, Campfire, etc.  
9:00 — Return to Dorms  
10:30 — Lights out

During Evening Activities, it is helpful to have a few Counselors “check out” the different activities as they walk around the campgrounds. This is for an extra element of supervision and control. The Counselors can stop and become involved in the activities for a few minutes if they wish. After Evening Activities have ended, they may join everyone in the Fellowship Time area.

5. One Counselor needs to be with the dorm at all times during scheduled activities. In the evenings, one of the two counselors may use the time between dinner and the last activity for personal time, visiting, etc. However, when the campers return to the Dorm, both Counselors should be there.

## COUNSELORS' PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES

There are some things you should consider regarding the activities you and your Dorm will be participating in. You may or may not have served as staff member in one of the activity departments—if you have you will have some appreciation of that perspective of camp; if you haven't you need to familiarize yourself with it. Regardless, you probably have not been able to see camp through the eyes of an Activity Head, so consider the following when you bring a Dorm to the activity.

1. Find out how the Activity Head would like you to be involved.  
Some will want you to participate with the Dorm, others won't. Some may ask for your assistance on the staff, while others will not. Understand that the Activity Head has set up the program very carefully—your participation or lack of it may cause problems. Activity Heads don't try to overlook you or take over your Dorm, they simply want to most effectively teach your campers. Don't **assume** one role or the other—ask. But remember—if you say you will be involved and the Activity Head agrees, stick to it—you've now become a part of the program.
2. Let the staff do their job—avoid interfering.  
The staff has been selected for their talents and abilities in that area. You may know more than they do, but the job is their responsibility. Remember that they aren't trying to counsel your Dorm. You are in charge of your Dorm, but the Activity Head and his staff are in charge of the activity. If you have suggestions or complaints take them to the Activity Head—he or she is the one who can explain procedures and respond where appropriate to your suggestions.
3. Communicate potential problems to the Activity Head before the class.  
Make it known who may be a problem and who needs special help or extra encouragement. The Activity Head can then alert his staff so they know how to respond in these situations.

**Summary:** *The key is communication.* Get to know the Activity Heads and let them get to know you. Respect their judgment and recognize the responsibility that rests on their shoulders. They don't get to go to five different activities a day—they teach one class several times and then another class several times.

## DINING PROCEDURES

Meals at camp should be pleasant, enjoyable, and relaxing.

We do not want to be wasteful. Campers should ask the servers only for that food they are going to eat. Campers should take only the allotted amount of each food item until it is announced that seconds are available.

Leave tables as clean as possible. This makes the Dining Hall a pleasant area for the next group of people to eat there.

Those wearing hats should leave them at the door. Shoes and socks should be worn in the Dining Hall. Sunglasses should not be worn in the Dining Hall. No bathing suits should be worn in the Dining Hall.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **First Aid Kit**

At some camps a first aid kit will be available for each dorm. In this case, we will go over the contents of the first aid kit with you to be sure you know what is available and how to use it. This kit is for any who need it but should be accessible only through the Counselor or Assistant Counselor. This is to insure that you are aware of any potential health problems that might be developing. Please bring the kits by the Health Center for restocking as needed. In other camps, all first aid supplies will be at a central location announced during orientation. Make sure you know where to take campers in need of medical attention.

### **Medication**

The Camp Administrator/Director will determine policy regarding turning in all medication to the Health Center in accordance with state law requirements.

### **Sickness/Accident**

Since you are the ones who are in daily contact with the campers, it will be up to you to monitor their conditions. Health is sometimes used as an “escape hatch” for getting out of doing something. However, when there is an illness, or someone is unable to take part in an activity, please let us know. We have a number of options available but we need to be kept aware of any problems for health and legal reasons. Rather than force participation, inform the Activity Supervisor.

Boys (and sometimes girls) will occasionally not tell you if they have an infection or open sore. Be aware of their physical condition. See who is limping or scratching. Don't overlook little injuries like cuts and blisters. Take the camper to the Health Center to have these treated. Small injuries often develop into something more serious, so be aware of their condition. They are your family during camp.

**Please note:** At some camps, where the Health Center staff is available 24 hours a day, they aren't awake 24 hours a day. There is no problem with genuine complaints. But the late night and early morning "Band Aid and mosquito bite" calls can be trying. Remember that the campers' schedule is different than the staff's.

### **General Health Points**

Please be aware of the following points and mention them where appropriate.

1. Be aware of the potential for sunburn, especially among the fair-skinned and redheads. Encourage use of sun screen, especially the first few days of camp. Many campers have had a miserable week with severely burned tops of ears, nose, and thighs. Use sun screen.
1. Explain that a tan is developed in stages. Overcast skies do not prevent a burn.
2. Watch for poison ivy. Have them wear long pants when working in brush. The oil will remain on the pants and spread unless they are washed as soon as possible after exposure.
3. Bed wetters: Use different methods to help them. Set an alarm clock and get them up to go to the bathroom. They should be assigned a bottom bunk; use a plastic sheet. Realize that any change in climate, food, water, etc. will cause some to react. If they are not involved in a vigorous activity in the evening, go easy on the liquids. Keep it a private matter. Make every effort not to embarrass them.
4. Please explain to the campers that it is up to them to request an anointing.
5. Be sure your campers drink enough water during the day. Especially when it's hot, lack of water can produce symptoms such as: light-headedness, weakness, headache, nausea, and shock. When all added together these equal heat stroke. Water should be available at every activity, but if it isn't, do not dismiss the need for it. Make it available. Even during normal temperatures, the increased activity greatly increases the need for water. At least twice during the day, make a specific point of having them drink a glass or two, even if it is close to lunch or dinner (at least a half hour before or an hour after eating). They should drink even if not thirsty. Pop, milk, and other similar fluids will actually increase the body's need for water, so don't let them resort to those sources as their "water" intake. They will all benefit from this, and we will have fewer health problems to deal with.
6. Dress according to weather conditions. Use common sense in guiding campers in correct choice of adequate clothing. Obviously if it is cold and scheduled activities are outside, please have them dress warmly. It is much easier to take off items than to put on items which aren't available. When water activities are scheduled in the morning, insist on warm-ups or towels for time spent wet and out of the water. One of the quickest ways to lower a person's resistance to getting sick is by remaining wet and cold. Hypothermia becomes a very real consideration when this occurs. It's great to act tough, but acting doesn't change the effects on the body.

## **Safety**

1. WE HAVE MANY ACTIVITIES IN AND ON THE WATER. BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL!! UTILIZE AND OBSERVE ALL SAFETY RULES, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES. DON'T TAKE CHANCES—RESPECT THE WATER!
2. There should be no horseplay around swimming, sailing, windsurfing, or canoeing areas.
3. Rings, beads, chains, necklaces, or watches should not be worn to activities such as sailing, basketball, volleyball.
4. “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.” Campers will pull foolish stunts in almost any situation. We need to be observant and alert.
5. You are the eyes and ears of the camp. Observe the rules of safety. Make sure they are followed. Part of your job is insuring the health and well-being of the campers through a diligent application of sensible rules. Many accidents could be prevented if we were more cautious and more safety conscious.
6. Remember: Accidents don't just happen. We can create them.

## **CAMPUS GROUNDS**

1. Leave the camp clean—pick up paper when you see it.
2. At least one Counselor needs to accompany the Dorm to Campus Improvement. You are needed for supervision and general morale.
3. We want to respect and maintain the facilities we are using.

## **THE SABBATH**

1. If we are not careful we can drift into a Wednesday or Thursday night mentality when Friday afternoon arrives. Remember that Friday is preparation day for the Sabbath; that means mental as well as physical preparation.
2. After the last activities on Friday afternoon, prior to dinner, a greeting of “Happy Sabbath,” etc., would be appropriate. Start to prepare the campers for the approaching Sabbath.
3. Encourage campers to maintain our tradition of friendliness. Each should meet the speakers and their wives, those who presented special music, and as many visitors as possible.

## **DISCIPLINE**

A cardinal goal we are trying to accomplish is that of self-discipline. We want our campers to do what is right because they believe it is right, not because we force them to.

The following procedures will be valuable in minimizing disciplinary problems:

- 1) Explain the reasons for the rules we have, and
- 2) When deciding on appropriate rules for the Dorm, give the campers an opportunity to assist in their development.

When they know why we have certain rules, and have an active part in the formulating process, they will feel a commitment to that which they have helped to form. Combine this with positive reinforcement, commendation, encouragement, and your presence and influence, and discipline problems will be minimized.

1. Have few rules and enforce them. *The fewer the rules, the better.*  
Rules should deal with essentials—safety, health, personal respect, and appropriate needs for decent and orderly procedures. Emphasize the positive aspect and work together in setting up reasonable regulations that can be accepted by all.
2. *Rules should be fairly and consistently enforced.*  
Rules which have been cooperatively developed will be easier to enforce than those arbitrarily laid down. The hostility toward the rules should be dramatically reduced and the campers will be more inclined to follow their commitment. We have every right to expect that appropriate standards of behavior, cooperatively made and cooperatively enforced, will assist in producing self-discipline and self-direction.

### **Enforcement**

1. *Don't act on your first impulse or too quickly.* Get both sides of the story. Make a distinction between deliberate wrongdoing and human weakness mistakes.

Be careful of first impulse penalties:

“I'm not going to bed until everyone does 100 push-ups.”

“Don't come back to the Dorm until you write a 1,000 word essay.”

Leave yourself an “out.”

2. *Be firm at the beginning.* It is easier to be strict at the beginning and loosen up as the Dorm becomes more responsible, rather than the other way around.
3. Stop the little things—the irritators, the pushing and shoving. It is easier to put out a match than a forest fire. Emphasize respect for private property and individual feelings.
4. Do not encourage or promote practical jokes and fooling around! (Proverbs 10:23)
5. Don't be afraid to acknowledge that you made a mistake.

6. You should not discipline your entire Dorm for the misconduct of a few. That only promotes hostility and resentment.
7. Discipline should generally revolve around loss of privileges. You may want to withhold a privilege for those campers who need help in “getting with the program.” They sign up last for Evening Activities, or lose a few minutes of Fellowship Time. Let your campers make suggestions in this area.

### **General Discipline Guidelines**

1. There is no need for a “lowering the boom” or “nail their hide to the wall” mentality; no “chew-outs,” or “raking them up one side and down the other.”
2. Eliminate put-downs, humiliation, public censure, ridicule, harangues, or cutting remarks, especially in front of their peers.
3. Do not use the “sit down and shut up” approach. Give the campers an opportunity to express their opinion, concerns, or problems. We listen; they talk. Giving them opportunity to talk many times solves the problem, plus you get to see where they are coming from and have a better understanding of their circumstances and feelings.
4. Be sparing of the “You are in a bad attitude” approach. This can be a cop-out, so to speak. Even if someone is in a bad attitude, there are other approaches.
  - “Are you satisfied with your actions?”
  - “Is this what your parents would want you to do?”
5. Do not use the office as a threat— “You report to the office,” etc. The Director’s Office is not a torture chamber or confrontation arena. Rather, it should be viewed as the place where one can go for discussing problems, talking, making suggestions, or passing on a friendly greeting.
6. Whenever possible, talk to your campers about their problems in a “walk by the way”:
  - When going to lunch
  - During Fellowship Time
  - In the Dining Hall
  - In a non-threatening or intimidating environment.

Begin any number of ways:

- “It was brought to my attention. . .”
- “I was disappointed to read a report. . .”
- “I understand at the last activity. . .”
- “Is there something I need to know about. . .”
- “I’d like to have you tell me what happened. . .”

7. Place emphasis on future improvement; give them a challenge; try to provide some motivation in the form of fulfilling their responsibility, accepting leadership, or being an example.
8. Above all, make sure our approach is kind, gentle, firm when necessary, and compassionate. Rather than emphasizing his/her failure, you might simply ask, “Are you still going to try and fulfill the commitment you made? If you say you are, then how and when?”
9. Be sure you spend time with your campers, because the better you know each one, the easier each potential problem can be handled.

### **Camp Discipline Specifics**

Any kind of major misconduct which causes serious injury, seriously hampers normal operation of the Dorm, or affects the safety or reputation of camp should be brought to the attention of the Administration who will handle the situation. Acts of major misconduct such as stealing, intoxication, smoking, use of illegal drugs, sexual misconduct, etc., should also be reported to the Camp Director immediately.

Other categories of misconduct should be handled by the Counselor.

Punishment should not include:

1. *Corporal punishment*—There are more productive options. Besides, there are some legal implications to be avoided.
2. *Denying an activity*—Unless the camper has shown disrespect toward the instructor or staff members, or has been rude or obnoxious. In this situation, he/she must sit out the class.
3. *Denying meals*—If the camper creates a disturbance, throws food, etc., he/she may be removed from the Dining Hall, asked to eat elsewhere, and perhaps given another form of discipline.
4. *Work assignments*—Unless there is work to be done as a result of his or her actions—graffiti to be removed, clothes to be washed, floor to be scrubbed, rocks put back into place, and so on.
5. *Anything you hope to invest with positive feelings*—Therefore, we should not assign campers to run laps, memorize Bible verses, write essays, do sit-ups, complete one or more Bible correspondence lessons, etc.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR END OF SESSION ACTIVITIES**

All-Star games, swimming races, canoeing races, awards presentation, special fellowship time, dance, final banquet.

## **Final Banquet Ideas**

1. Examples of special awards that can be given — Extra Mile Award, Inspiration Award, or Outstanding Achievement Award.
2. For the Banquet on the final night of camp, escorts could be used on a brother-sister Dorm basis. Counselors could arrange the line-up, and the boys could meet their sisters in front of the girls' Dorms.
3. Following the Final Banquet, there could be an awards presentation, a Fellowship Time, and a Dance.
4. A Camper could be selected from your Dorm for the following awards: 1) Most Improved Award—The individual whom you feel has shown the most improvement since the first day of camp. 2) Outstanding Participant Award—The individual whom you feel has the biggest impact in the Dorm involving leadership, service, encouragement, and example. The outstanding campers could be selected for some of the other special awards.
5. Possible Final Banquet Format:

Boys Escort Sister Dorm to Banquet	(15 min.)
Dorms Are Seated	(15 min.)
Final Banquet	(60 min.)
Award Presentations and Director's Final Comments	(30 min.)
Take Down and Fellowship Time	(30 min.)
Dance	(90 min.)

## **Camper Departures**

If you have collected campers' airline tickets for safekeeping, when you give your campers their tickets back, one at a time look them in the eye, ask them where they will put it, and tell them to make sure they have their carry-ons as they walk out. Right before they leave the Dorm, ask them once again where their ticket is.

### **STATEMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS GIVEN BY FORMER COUNSELORS**

You can gain valuable insights into the counselor's job by reviewing these.

Finding a "welcome" note on each of the campers' bunks would give them a feeling of belonging and being part of the Dorm.

Posting a list of the names and addresses of the campers in the Dorm could be a good tool in starting new and lasting friendships.

Girls' Dorms especially need the personal touches such as flowers, little books, and pictures.

Counselors could profit from some talking with those who have counseled previously at camp as well as with administrative personnel. Knowing what to expect and becoming familiar with potential problems before camp even begins is helpful.

Both Counselors and Assistant Counselors should participate in nightly Dorm meetings.

Counselors should realize the impact of their non-verbal responses in making a mark, good or bad, on the camper's own character, personality and attitude toward life.

We should remember that each camper is unique, and can't always be treated just like every other one.

Some points to remember in stimulating campers are: Include them in planning, Use their special talents. Be interested in their growth, development, and happiness. Define your limits and standards. Remember the importance of group pressure. Campers are stimulated by the skills the Counselor possesses and will be quick to respond to these and work hard. Utilize public recognition as a motivating force.

Being positive when instructing a group is important. Stress "do" rather than "don't." The wise teacher uses a positive approach to the improvement of behavior.

Establish as few rules as possible and keep them as simple as possible. Examine them carefully from time to time and eliminate those that are unnecessary.

One big overall expression that is going to make all the difference in the world to the newcomer at first is whether or not he notices there's a genuine and sincere interest in him personally.

Youth hate to see hypocrisy in older people.

Application of the Golden Rule is important.

Realize you must be patient and that there are going to be some long hours and late nights. Try to understand each camper and pick out the problem ones right away.

Pick out a leader and she can be an asset to you and your Dorm. She can be a great motivator, get her jobs done, and take a few younger girls under her wing. Watch out, though, that she doesn't become your pet. That will create a tremendous amount of strife between you, your pet, and the other girls in the Dorm.

Make sure that you uphold the regulations and guidelines of camp and make sure your campers see that you are 100% behind those guidelines. Then they have no room for excuses as to why they did not need to obey.

Get your rest, don't blow up over little things, or big things for that matter. Take it all in stride—it will eventually work out.

From the very beginning be open and try to get to know the girls as soon as you can. If you can be organized and ready for them before they get there, you'll have a head start.

## **SUMMARY OF A COUNSELOR'S ORIENTATION TO HIS DORM**

**Goals:** The Assistant Counselor covered two goals which we as a Dorm would have.

#1 — Family: As it relates to the Dorm, camp, home—family, church, God family, and your part in it. It was covered in such a way as to instill the desire to give to the family and be a part of it.

#2 — (Ideas) Participation, Teamwork, Accepting a Challenge

After these goals were set, then the Dorm itself would set a third. We directed the topics that were appropriate and they chose the goal. Example—Setting the standards, enthusiasm. This would and did make them feel as if the goals were something they had helped to set.

**Rules:** This was presented by myself in view of how we can achieve our goals. I did not intend to “lay down the law,” but brought it out in a way which was accepted and even fun. In the end, the need for rules and order was established and was clear to the campers.

It was explained that what my Assistant said to them was as if from me, yet the decisions were to be made by me as I sought counsel from the faculty and administration. The camp rules took a load off our backs in that they were already established structure which we obeyed. We did not make them, yet we would support them all.

**Meetings:** Some of our most valuable time was actually spent in our Dorm meeting every night. We keyed in on making it inspiring, encouraging, fun and humorous, direct and open for all to participate. It even came as a surprise to me when some nights we would get home late and the guys would ask if we could still have the meeting.

This is the outline of our meetings:

- 1) Briefly cover how we achieved our goals throughout the day.
- 2) Summarize comments on the evaluation sheet.
- 3) Ask them how we can improve as a family and team in view of activity evaluations.  
This will normally produce topics you may want to pursue in step 4.
- 4) Cover any areas in which they are missing the mark.
- 5) Ask for volunteers to report who did something today which deserves recognition.
- 6) Review the next day's activities.
- 7) Pray; let them volunteer.

**Topics to Discuss:**

**The “Cool Syndrome”** — The second session many of the young men were so cool they could not bring themselves to chant or sing as others did. I discussed what “cool” was: cool people are afraid to step out—afraid to look bad when, in fact, they look miserable alone.

**Trust**—Being a team member means that you must be trusted. “If one of you violates that trust (for example: stealing), we may never find you out, but this Dorm could never reach its potential to be brothers, to be family—Who wants to destroy that chance?”

**Fun**—What is fun? I like to have fun. I like to work hard and play hard. This is how we can have fun. This was incorporated as we discussed the motto: Ecc. 9:10—”Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might.” It worked.

**Love**—What is it? How is it expressed? How can we express it? We discussed what true love is—to help them to be a team and see that their parents love them. We addressed “tough love” as that which is best for another though they may not see or understand it.

**General Comments:** As the Counselor I wanted to be their friend. It is important that they respect you first; therefore, friendship must be put on the back burner at the beginning. As that respect is built, you then are able to become close friends without it interfering with your office. With the girls it may be different, with other Counselors it may be different. I used it, it work for me.

Being involved in their activities helped me to know how they felt, what they learned and what was good or bad as we strove for the goals. They openly expressed how they felt about by helping them in the different areas—they loved it. If you have talents in the areas, then let them see it—not for vanity but they want to honor your talent as well as be encouraged by it. When I skied they wanted to ski like me—it was an incentive for them.

Time with friends: This is also important. On the Sabbath, my Assistant would take the Dorm for an hour while I fellowshipped and vice versa. It is always encouraging to share ideas and hear what is going on outside of your Dorm, especially when you do this with a close friend. Don’t lose touch.

Personal time is the hardest time to find. Prayer is a must. The job is impossible for any human—only God can give the answers in how to react or reply in certain circumstances.

## **SUMMARY OF A DORM ORIENTATION MEETING**

A five or ten minute ice breaker given by Counselor.

Have each camper introduce his bunkmate and tell what his bunkmate wants to get out of camp. Explain how we are a family unit and need both goals and rules.

Tell the Dorm that we want to be the best at something and in order to do this we must have goals. Ask the Dorm for goals. This is what by Dorm came up with:

### Short Range Goals

1. Friendly Dorm
2. Enthusiastic Dorm
3. Get to know the name of everyone in the dorm
4. Clean and orderly Dorm all session
5. Get everyone to write home

### Long Range Goals

1. High standard of participation in Christian Living class
2. Teamwork (unity)
3. Service Dorm
4. Encourage one another
5. Sportsmanship

Although not all of these were accomplished by having them as goals, I feel that we tried much harder than we otherwise would have.

Another Dorm goal or practice was to have an evening and morning prayer in which a different camper would be selected. (This could be discussed in orientation.)

Other things included in the Dorm Orientation were the general rules such as:

1. Mr./Miss for College Staff ; first names for High School Staff
2. A clean and orderly Dorm
3. No practical jokes
4. No gum in classroom activities or services
5. No horseplay in Dorm
6. Encourage first names—no nicknames
7. Bible Study
8. No radios
9. Dining Hall conduct and food
10. Lights out procedure

Discipline: I asked the Dorm what they would recommend and they suggested:

- missing some of Fellowship Time
- being last to sign up for Evening Activities

Discussed Evening Activities and need for good conduct at these times. Evening Activities are a privilege.

## FIRST DORM MEETING ICE-BREAKERS

To help alleviate the fear of public speaking, the following procedure can be helpful:

1. Have the Dorm sit in a circle.
2. Have each camper remain seated as he speaks for about 2 minutes.
3. Ask each camper to give their name, age, home church area, and answer a simple question designed to elicit a short yet varied answer, e.g. Why I came to camp, My goal for camp.

It is helpful to hear an ice breaker sample from the counselors.

## SUGGESTED DORM ROUTINE

### MORNING:

Designated the night before - one half of the Dorm make beds while the other half take showers.

Assistant Counselor: Morning prayer (or appointed camper)

Line up and go to breakfast

Return and do Dorm duties

Counselor lines campers up 15 minutes before first class, then inspects Dorm.

Take campers to activities.

### EVENING:

- Evening Activities (Counselor could have a copy of sign-up sheet and “float” around to monitor activities.)
- Fellowship Time
- Allow at least a half-hour to prepare for bed.
- After designated time nobody leaves the Dorm without Counselor’s permission.
- Dorm Meeting: Overview of entire day (strengths and weaknesses), cover topic of leadership, masculinity, femininity or something that needs to be said to help the Dorm.  
On these subjects, make them discussions so the campers can be involved and give their input (open up to each other).  
Evening prayer by Counselor or appointed camper.  
Put to bed.  
Dorm Parent “Tuck In”  
When lights first go out, can have light talking for 15 minutes.  
After time is up no talking or unnecessary noise or a penalty is given. (Hint: Fellowship Time reduction is very effective in this regard.)  
Encourage personal prayer after lights out: “These are God’s people and He is working with this Dorm so we give Him credit and thanks for our achievements and ask Him to continue working with us.”

## BOYS' DORM PROCEDURES

1. Pre-Camp: Before the arrival of the campers, (could have their names of their beds) and also have their names implanted in your mind. This will give them a sense of security when they arrive and it also gives them a feeling of belonging.
2. Dorm Orientation Meeting: It is a good idea to have the Assistant Counselor give half of the meeting, i.e., the Counselor takes the first half of the meeting—take a break—then come back for the icebreakers from the campers. You must be enthusiastic and strong in this meeting. Be careful and find the middle road.
3. When you discuss the rules, make sure you are giving them the why's for each procedure, i.e., why we don't have pillow fights, water fights, practical jokes, etc. This is very important because when they see the results of things if we don't follow the rules, they get the picture. It is also a good idea to have the campers give examples of why we do things we do.
4. Assign a monitor for keeping each wing clean and together. Tell them they need to set the example in everything, help others, make sure everyone's Dorm duty is getting done.
5. Evening Activity Time: We assigned one of our more responsible campers to take the group to their activity. There would be about five campers per activity night that would have this responsibility.
6. Night Dorm Meetings: Keep them short and sweet.
7. Lights Out/Quiet Time: To solve the restless camper at bedtime syndrome, we established a Lights Out Time (e.g., 10:15 p.m.) And then a Quiet Time (until 10:30 p.m.). This gives the restless campers time to talk about the day or whatever for fifteen minutes. Then they are ready to sleep. (Results: Works great.) Getting sleep is very important. Make sure you and your Dorm get it.
8. The "Fellowship Clock": A very effective procedure, in fact, my only form of effective discipline. Any person late (after designated time) counted as one minute per man. At night, any noise after quiet time was counted onto the clock.
9. One of the best things you can give to your Dorm is yourself. I found that the best time for a heartfelt talk was in the evening between lights out time and quiet time (usually 20 to 30 minutes). The campers will open up to their Counselor more at this time than any other. These 20-30 minutes each night will be the best talks that you will have with the campers. The lights are out, and you just stroll through the Dorm talking with the campers. Results: Works great.

10. Always remember that you, as a Counselor, are always being watched. Whatever you do, the campers will see. Work on living your best example ever. It is important to be a strong Counselor, but at the same time, a strong friend.

### **DORM ORIENTATION GUIDELINES FOR GIRL’S DORMS**

1. Icebreakers from the Counselor and Assistant—These allow the girls to settle in to the meeting and get to know their newly adopted, “parents.”
2. Follow suggestions under “First Dorm Meeting Ice-Breakers”.
3. Some Counselors have found it helpful to have a Dorm Theme for the week. Keep in mind the special aspects of Camp that will be incorporated daily. Examples include: Strive for excellence, Rise to the Challenge, Noteworthy Dorm. Theme “Rise to the Challenge” could use balloons for the main decor. Written on some of the balloons could be the words: respect, trust, femininity, enthusiasm, unity, giving leadership, etc. Theme “Noteworthy Dorm” could use eighth notes for the main decor.

As you continue with the orientation, these words could be the backbone or structure to your “Talk”:

Respect	For Camp and the physical surroundings, For the counselors and staff, For themselves, And for each other, their belongings, their space.
Trust	Borrowing clothes without asking is stealing. Trust in each other and they will trust in you.
Femininity	Be discreet in clothing. Guys like girls who respect themselves and stand up for what they believe in, not loud mouths just to draw attention, etc.
Enthusiasm	Makes everyone happier and helps each other enjoy the activities more. Encouragement is a vital key at Camp.
Unity	One of our major goals is to become one big family—in the dorm, with Other girls’ dorms, and with the whole Camp!
Giving	The more you give to others, whether it be enthusiasm, encouragement, time, a listening ear, the better time you will have!
Leadership	There are all kinds of leaders. Everyone has this chance to become a leader of themselves, to find their talents and give them away to others. This is why we are given talents—to help those who may not have the same ones

we do. We can all be silent leaders by example. Be a committee of one to lead yourself in the right way and it will definitely be noticed by others.

4. After this, it might be a good idea to lead into the “Rules” section. But first, have a discussion on why there are rules. Why should we listen to instruction? The more answers they give, the more it will seem like their ideas, and they won’t feel like this is a military camp. This is the age group where authority and rules aren’t accepted as readily without question, so the more input they have, the better.
  - a. Camp rules
  - b. Dorm rules
  - c. Dining Hall procedures
5. A great way to end the meeting might be something like this: So, again, a big welcome to Camp. Hang on to your hats because it’s going to be fast paced and exciting. You may find yourself tired and ready to just crawl back in bed, but you can do that at home. Take advantage of everything while you’re here. If some of you have problems at home, leave them there for the next week. No one has to know your past or the things you’re worried about. This is the place to start all over. Be that person you have always wanted to be. Give all that you have. You won’t regret it!

**Other specific points to think about:**

1. Hugs at night are great. You wouldn’t believe how they change from the beginning of the session to the end. You can also tell a lot about how much they want to be here, or how afraid they are, or the good attitudes from the bad when you hug each of the girls. It’s fantastic. They also tend to open up more at night when they are relaxed and comfortable. Pretty soon they won’t let you go to bed until you have hugged them goodnight!!
2. Let them make suggestions about songs, who to make Sabbath cards for, how to thank the various departments, etc. Then they feel like they are contributing to their dorm.
3. Discuss prayer with them. Let them know that if they aren’t sure how to pray, they can come into your room anytime, and you’d love to explain God and why He needs to hear from us. Tell them that their Camp experience will be a lot more rewarding and meaningful if they share it verbally with God.
4. Encourage Sabbath notes to other girl dorms. It is usually the tendency to make them all for the guys.
5. Have a scripture of the day and discuss its relevance to the goals they have set as a dorm for that day. Have one of them read the scripture and take a few minutes for them to tell you what it means.

6. Remember to take time off for yourself. You are no good to the girls if you are ready to pull your hair out if you are asked one more question. (Yes, even if you have just told them all the answers two minutes before.)
7. Most of all, have fun!! The experience you have been blessed with will be priceless for the rest of your life. You will learn more about yourself and how to deal with others than you could ever imagine. You have been put in this position because you have something vital to give to each and every girl in your dorm. Make it a goal to find out what they need from you, and give it all to them . . . and more!!