Town of MERRIMACK

Parks and Recreation DEPARTMENT



CAMP *EMPLOYEE HANDBOOk*

*2023*

The Camp Experience Enriches Children’s Lives and Changes the World

Dear Camp Employee,

Welcome to the Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department! You have been chosen to represent the Town of Merrimack Summer Day Camp Program. You will be serving as a vital role in representing the Parks & Recreation Department to the public. Professionalism is expected at all times while you are working in your assigned role.

We are excited to have you as part of our outstanding team. You were hired because we believe that you can contribute to the achievement of our goals and to the bottom line of success, and share our commitment to our mission statement. This employee handbook contains the key policies, goals, benefits, and expectations of the Department of Parks & Recreation; and other information you will need as part of our team. We want to take this opportunity to welcome you to the team. We are confident that your enthusiasm, knowledge, creativity, and energy will result in a rewarding and successful experience for our participants and for you.

**OUR MISSION:** To inspire children to develop a positive self-image and to increase their social skills while building new and everlasting friendships. We create a space for campers to learn new skills and work as a group while gaining confidence in their unique abilities as individuals.

Our goal at Camp is to create a fun and safe environment that promotes self-confidence, respect, and good sportsmanship. We inspire children to develop a positive self-image and to increase their social skills while building new and everlasting friendships. We create a space for campers to learn new skills and work as a group while gaining confidence in their unique abilities as individuals.

The Town of Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department strives to be inclusive of all people.  We recognize that campers and staff come to us with varying backgrounds, experiences and identities.  The Parks & Recreation Department will try to work with all staff members and campers, including transgender and non-gender conforming campers and staff members, to accommodate their needs and create a positive experience for everyone.

Our camp is licensed by the New Hampshire Dept. of Health & Human Services and is accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). Our accreditation by this Association helps us to ensure a fun focus on program quality, health & safety issues.

AT CAMP, IT’S EVERYONE’S JOB TO…

* Ensure that we provide a safe, relaxing, carefree and enjoyable camp experience
* Provide a quality Camp program
* Maintain a positive and flexible attitude
* Help make this season the most rewarding it can be for both campers and staff
* There is much enjoyment and satisfaction to be gained from doing a job well, no matter what the job. It is important to be setting a good example for all who will observe you over the course of the summer by showing them that hard work, honesty and perseverance are admirable qualities.
* The Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department expects an honest day’s work from each of its employees. Employees are expected to report to work on time and be prepared to start work at that time.

ORIENTATION:

All staff members are required to attend mandatory staff orientation prior to beginning work for the season. The purpose of this training is to “outfit” you with the skills you will need to perform your role as a staff member this summer. It’s very important these manuals go home with you at the end of this training. This manual is a guide to help you perform to your very best!

TIME OFF REQUESTS:

This is a Summer Seasonal job and as such, we expect that all employees are prepared to work every day when Camp is open. However, we recognize that things do come up from time to time and a day off may be needed or you may need to leave early to go back to School.  Staff may request a maximum of seven (7) days off during the summer. With that said, if you are unable to work the 9th week of Camp (August 17th – 21st) because you are going off to school; that does count as 5 of your days. All time off requests must be submitted no later than Friday, June 19th.

CALLING OUT SICK:

Everyone gets sick. If you are unable to make it to work, you must call the Camp at 886-7026. A phone call is all that we ask! Employees who repeatedly call out sick (whether excused or not) may be subject to disciplinary action including verbal and written warnings. Severe cases will result in termination. You will not receive compensation for sick time or vacation time as part of your employment. Attendance and punctuality are one of the most important facets of your job performance review. All unapproved absences will be noted in your personnel file.

TARDINESS:

Camp will be open everyday, Monday through therefore, all employees are expected to be at their work site ready to start the day. Employees are only paid for the time that they are at work and on the clock. Any employee that is routinely late to work will receive verbal & written warnings which may affect their future employment with the Town.

USE OF COMPANY PROPERTY:

The Parks & Recreation Department will provide you with the necessary equipment to do your job. This equipment is never to be used for personal use, nor removed from the physical confines of the Town’s facilities unless it is approved and your job specifically requires use of company equipment outside the physical facility.

All Town employees are required to wear seat belts while operating or riding in any vehicle on Town business. This applies to Town vehicles, personally owned vehicles, as well as the vehicles of others, regardless of the presence of any supplemental restraint system (airbags).

CONDUCT:   
While in the employ of Naticook Day Camp, camp staff will behave in accordance with the responsibilities of the position and will keep hours and habits which will enable him/her to properly carry out his/her assigned responsibilities.

Each staff member is expected to take every care to protect the privacy and person of each camper. Physical punishment or any sexual contact between staff and campers is inappropriate, and will be grounds for dismissal. Staff members shall under no circumstances, engage in any physical contact with a camper.

The Department of Parks & Recreation takes the problem of drug and alcohol abuse seriously, and is committed to providing a substance free work place for its employees. No employee is allowed to consume, possess, sell or purchase any alcoholic beverage at any town-based facility. No employee may use, possess, sell, transfer or purchase any drug or other controlled substance, which may alter an individual or individual’s mental or physical capacity. The exceptions are aspirin or ibuprofen based products and legal drugs that have been prescribed to that employee, which are being used in the manner prescribed.

The Parks & Recreation Department will not tolerate employees who report for duty while impaired by use of alcohol, drugs or other substances. All employees should report evidence of alcohol or drug abuse to a supervisor immediately. In cases where the use of alcohol or drugs poses an imminent threat to the safety of persons or property, an employee must report the violation. Employees who violate the Anti-Substance Abuse Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

PROPER ATTIRE:

As a Parks & Recreation employee, we expect you to present a clean and professional appearance when you represent us and come in contact with the public. You are expected to dress in accepted and stated attire. ) Staff T-Shirts must be worn each day to camp, the only time a staff member wouldn't be wearing a staff t-shirt is if they are participating in a dress up day for a theme day at camp. Attire that consists of anything that reveals midriffs, bare backs, cleavage, or underwear is not acceptable.

Staff members should arrive to camp each day wearing sneakers. Crocs, sandals, flip flops or other open toed shoes are not appropriate. You may be asked to go home and change if your outfit does not comply with our guidelines and you will not be paid for missed time at work.

Swimming: For female employees, a one piece or two bathing suit is required for all beach and water events. For two piece bathing suits, bikinis are not acceptable or allowed when dealing with children in the water. For male employees, no Speedos or indecent bathing suits are allowed.

Staff T-Shirts should not be cut in any way and must be worn each work day. Staff shirts should not be worn after camp is over for the day. When a staff member has a Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department Staff T-Shirt on, they are representing the Town. If you are behaving inappropriately, the public will notice you and will call the Parks & Recreation Department to let us know.

Remember, you are looked upon as a professional. As a professional, this department and the town expects you to perform your duties in all aspects of the job. Professional appearance and demeanor are essential. Persons not complying with uniform directives and requirements may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Social Media Policy:

Counselors shall not use any form of social media, in any way so as to tarnish the Town of Merrimack or the Parks and Recreation Department’s reputation or mission. As employees of this department, you are embodiments of our mission. Social media is NOT to be used during the course of the Camp Day. The Parks & Recreation Department has an official Facebook Page which will serve as the “official social media source” for Naticook Day Camp and only the Camp Director has the authority to post to this page. Counselors are prohibited from connecting with their campers through social networking. Failure to adhere to this rule will include disciplinary action up to and including, termination. Only members of the leadership team may take photos of campers for the Facebook page. No other photos should be taken of campers.

JOB PERFORMANCE:

Throughout your employment, you will be evaluated on your performance by your Supervisors, by the Director of Parks & Recreation and by the general public. You should not arrive to work unless you are capable of completing your job duties and responsibilities completely.

All staff will receive a verbal and/or written warning regarding any behavior that is found to be unacceptable. Staff will also receive praise when deserving. You will have the chance to comment on all warnings and evaluations. Staff is evaluated formally at the end of the summer as well as informally throughout the summer.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE:

From time to time, problems related to your job may develop. It is the Parks & Recreation Departments’ intention that these problems be the subject of candid and open conversation with the objective of improvement and prompt resolution. Such problems may include, but are not limited to, violation of or conflict with department policy, performance on the job, or other job-related situations.

Members of the Parks & Recreation Department supervisory staff are available to counsel employees at any point during the progressive discipline process. The following steps cover the normal pattern of progressive discipline for employees that have completed the probationary period:

1. The supervisor discusses with the employee the specific performance problem, what improvements are needed, and a date by which corrections should occur. The supervisor will document the date and content of the conversation. No official notation will go into the employee's file at this time.

2. If the performance problem persists, the supervisor and the employee will have another discussion. If required at this time, a written warning will be issued to the employee. This warning will contain a statement of the problem, what corrections are necessary, and a date by which the improvement should occur. The employee will be asked to sign the form indicating she or he has read it. A copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file, and a copy will be given to the employee.

3. If the performance problem still persists, a second written warning will be issued adhering to the format outlined in step 2 above.

4. If the performance problem recurs after the second written warning, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may occur. The Progressive Discipline policy described above does not apply to serious infractions that may result in immediate suspension or immediate dismissal for cause. Such infractions include, but are not limited to stealing, intoxication or other violation of the department’s drug/alcohol policy, dishonesty, breach of confidentiality, fraud, or clear cases where conflict of interest has been violated. In such cases, the decision to terminate an employee for cause will be discussed with the Director of Parks & Recreation, Human Resource Coordinator and Town Manager prior to any action being taken.

VEHICLE POLICIES:

* Transportation to and from camp is the staff member’s responsibility.
* Staff members are not permitted to use camp vehicles for personal purposes.
* Staff members may not transport campers in their own personal vehicles.
* Personal Vehicles: All vehicles must be kept parked and locked in the parking lot.
* Personal vehicles will not be used for Camp purposes.
* Only those employees who have the express permission from the Director of Parks & Recreation may use Camp vehicles. The following employees have permission to use the Camp Utility Gators: Maintenance staff, Camp Director, Assistant Director, and Health Center Staff members. All other employee need to obtain permission from the Director of Parks & Recreation first.
* When using the Gators, all passengers must sit in an official seat. Under no circumstances are they allowed to ride in the bed of the vehicle. Gator should never be driven faster than 10 mph.

PERSONAL PROPERTY POLICIES:

* Staff members should NOT bring electronic devices, money, sports equipment, animals or any other valuables to Camp. Staff members may not use their cell phones while on duty unless specific permission is given by the Camp Director.
* Weapons, Drugs or Alcohol of any kind! If a staff member is found to have such items, they will be immediately terminated

Disciplinary Actions:

Any employee may be dismissed immediately should he/she be found in neglect of their duties. The following matters are not intended as an all-inclusive list of potential disciplinary situations, but these offenses, as well as others, may constitute grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

* Acts of disobedience or insubordination.
* Acts of disrespect toward officials, Town employees or the public, to include uncivil or discourteous attitudes, or the use of indecent, lewd, or slanderous language or actions toward the public or any Town employee.
* Gross carelessness or neglect of duties or frequent incidents of simple carelessness or neglect of duties.
* Violation of the Drug-Free work place policy.
* One or more violations of federal law, New Hampshire law, or Town ordinances, dependent upon circumstances, seriousness, and frequency.
* Conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude.
* Misuse, misappropriation, destruction, theft or conversion to personal use or gain of Town-owned or leased property, equipment, supplies, material, or services.
* Frequent tardiness or unauthorized absences.
* Accepting cash, gifts, or other items of value for performing special favors through any municipal service.
* Disclosure of any confidential information that would not otherwise be made known to the public under the Right-to-Know law.
* Granting special consideration, advantage, or treatment to any person beyond that which is available to every other resident of the Town of Merrimack.
* Failing to immediately report a loss of, or damage to, Town property as a result of accident, theft, or misuse.
* Failing to adhere to established policies and procedures as adopted by the Town Council and/or the Town Manager.
* Creating a hostile work environment or otherwise harassing or substantially contributing to a disharmonious workplace for other Town employees.

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Remember, during the course of our own personal lives, we are all guests or customers at restaurants, department stores, private clubs, etc. Ask yourself after an individual has left your group "Did I handle that parent in the same manner I would have wanted to be treated?"

Public relations may be viewed from several angles. The most obvious way is how the general public perceives what it sees and hears from you and regarding you. Any question that you are unable to answer should be courteously directed to the Camp Director or the Director of Parks & Recreation. If the media shows up and asks you a question, please indicate that you are not the appropriate person to contact and they should speak to the Director of Parks & Recreation.

Cell phone usage:

As an employee, you are being paid to work with children not talk, text or check social media. Cell phones should be left at home or in the employee’s vehicle. If someone needs to get a hold of you due to an emergency; they can call the Camp Office and then a staff member can relay the message to you when it is feasibly possible.

VISITORS:

All visitors to Naticook Day Camp must be authorized by the Camp Director. This includes former staff members not currently employed, relatives of campers or staff, any friends of staff or campers, or individuals from the community. Visitors may not take responsibility for any camper under any circumstances.

PUBLIC FACILITY / CAMP INTRUDERS:

Naticook Day Camp operates in Wasserman Park which is a public park. All employees must be vigilant that general members of the community are not in areas where they shouldn’t be (inside cabins, Camp Office, Function Hall, Arts & Crafts building, etc.). If you see something that seems to be out of place then you should notify the Camp Director, Waterfront Director, Camp Nurse or Director of Parks & Recreation immediately.

On the first day of camp, all campers are issued wrist bands which correspond to their swimming ability, but they are also used to distinguish our campers vs. children in the park in general.

KITCHEN RULES:

1. Kitchen is not to be used as a cut through from the front room of the function hall to the back room of the function hall.
2. Counselors need to wait at kitchen door for desserts.
3. Dessert of the day will be the same for all campers with the exception of food allergies. Cathy will have the allergy list with camper’s names, bunk numbers and specific allergies. Only children on this list will be allowed to receive an alternative dessert item.
4. There will be no eating around the salad bar, food station, or sandwich station when lunch is being served. The only exception to this rule is when lunch is being held inside due to weather. In this case food is to be eaten at assigned table.
5. Any activities that require use of the kitchen must be submitted to Cathy directly at least one week prior to proposed date. Cathy will review all submitted requests and either deny or accept a request based off the ability for her to make accommodations. Approved or denied requests will be returned within in 1 to 2 days after being submitted.
6. The Kitchen will not be used as a place to gather and socialize and at no time is any staff members allowed to help themselves to food or other items in the kitchen without speaking with Cathy first.
7. All questions, concerns, requests for kitchen use, supplies, or use of refrigerator is to be discussed with Cathy directly and not with her assistant.
8. If the camp is in need of supplies such as cups, bowls, plates, food, use of storage, etc. they must communicate with Cathy directly at least one week in advance to receive these items so she can ensure they are available.

WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT:

Overall, each staff member will be required to plan, organize, and conduct a variety of leisure and recreational activities during the extent of the program. You will enjoy your experience much more as you devote more time and effort to these three components.

PLANNING is a vital component of the four steps. Without a good program plan for each day, you will find yourself with 20 children and nothing to do all day. By the end of the day, you will be stressed out and the children will go home bored and angry.

The best-laid plans can go awry without a little ORGANIZATION. When planning activities, keep in mind:

1. The age and interests of the children
2. The size of area that you need
3. Supplies and materials that you will need
4. Special arrangements with other groups
5. How long the activity will take
6. How to adapt to indoors if raining and/or high heat
7. How complicated the activity might be for the age group
8. Other activities that can be added if you finish up early and what supplies they might need

Some things to keep in mind when CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY:

1. Do all the children know the game? If not, explain it briefly and demonstrate with the rules.
2. If teams are needed, how are you going to choose them (Captains will make kids feel left out).
3. Uneven teams and a lopsided score – Do you: stop the game? Choose teams over? Or adapt the rules?
4. If you’re introducing a new game and some children don’t want to play, what do you do?

YOU WILL FIND THE CHILDREN ENJOY THE GAMES EVEN MORE WHEN YOU PARTICIPATE AND HAVE FUN TOO! STAFF MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN ALL ACTIVITIES.

One suggested method for teaching a new activity is the “I do, we do, you do” method. Essentially what this means is that the leader demonstrates the activity first; the group practices it together, then the group does it on their own. Perhaps the most important thing to remember is to BE ENTHUSIASTIC about your job. Your enthusiasm will be evident to everyone around you – especially the children.

HELP DEVELOP CREATIVITY:

One role of a leader is to be as creative as possible when you plan, organize, and implement activities. Playing the same games throughout the summer can lead to a bored participant and staff; instead, make some changes to the games that would add a twist to the overall activity.

MOTIVATION:

You provide the motivation to the children to come to camp everyday! Your interest in a child can help to motivate him/her to communicate thoughts and ideas. Remember that your motivation will naturally filter to the children. Keeping high energy levels is difficult to maintain at all times throughout the summer.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE:

Each of you will act as an example and a role model for the children. The way you carry yourself, your behavior, and appearance will make a powerful impact on each child. These qualities will serve as a framework for kids to follow in your footsteps.

KEEP IT FAIR:

Throughout the summer, discipline will be an important factor on a daily basis. Establish Camp rules from the beginning and it will be easier to enforce them; trying to enforce rules before they are established will prove to be unsuccessful. At the start of each session, remind children of the boundaries and benefits of Camp. This will serve as a good refresher for returning children of the program and leaders. Leaders should maintain the same level of discipline with all children. If a difference of opinion arises between staff, discuss the situation away from the children. There should be no favoritism, making fun or isolating of any child at any time.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS, CHILDREN AND STAFF

Parents have only 2 contacts with the program – at drop off in the morning and at pick-up in the afternoon. These are the times when their opinions of you and the program are made. How you communicate with the parents at these times will make all the difference in the world. Make these impressions good lasting ones!

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS – (ESSENTIAL!):

1. Everyday!
2. Use positive statements when talking about the program or the child. Use examples “Timmy showed great sportsmanship during the basketball tournament today”.
3. Be friendly, open and courteous in your communications with the parents.
4. If you do not know the answer to a particular question, tell the parents you will find out or refer them to someone who does. Avoid guessing.
5. Never discuss a child or their family with others. Maintain confidentiality!
6. Parents want to know what is happening with their children. Keep them informed of the programs events, activities and the child’s progress in them.
7. Avoid talking about the child with him/her present. If necessary ask the parent if you can call them later.
8. Never give parents your home phone number.

COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN:

1. Always give directions using positive statements (ex. “walk please” instead of “no running”)
2. Listen to children and respect individual differences.
3. Avoid talking down to children – bend down, look at them “eye to eye”.
4. Never ask children to do something that you would not do yourself.
5. Be sure you are clear in your expectation.
6. On the first day, establish the rules. Review them daily with the children.
7. Post the day’s activities where the children can see them.
8. Remember children are great imitators and that you are a role model for them. Speak and act accordingly.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF:

1. Know who to go to with questions, concerns, etc. There are no stupid questions.
2. Keep the supervisor informed of everything.
3. Handle personal problems before or after program hours. Arguing amongst the staff causes tension and affects the children.

4. Work as a team.

Personal Care:

The sun can cause damage to your body. Your job requires you to spend long periods of time exposed to the elements. Every staff member should apply sunscreen frequently. We recommend that you wear a hat and sunglasses. Dehydration can happen quickly, often without any signs. You should constantly be taking in fluids. Every staff member should bring his or her own thermos or water bottle and keep it filled and with them at all times. Know the signs for heat exhaustion, as you are all prime candidates.

EMPLOYEE ACCIDENTS:

If an employee is injured while on duty, he/she must report it to the Camp Nurse immediately! The Camp Nurse will fill out an Employee Accident Report, which must be submitted, to the Recreation Department within 24 hours. Do not consider any injury to be trivial. It may require medical attention later. THE CAMP DIRECTOR MUST CALL THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO REPORT ANY EMPLOYEE ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES.

DAILY ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR CAMPERS

(Does Not Apply to Extended Care Participants)

Naticook Day Camp is located in a public park and so safety and security are our most important priorities. The following procedure applies for morning drop off between 8:00 – 8:15 am and afternoon pickup between 3:45 - 4:00 pm, and does not apply to Extended Care Arrival & Dismissal.

* All families will be issued two copies of a Parking Placard with their family name on it. When they pull into the Park they will have this placard visible in their windshield. There will be a staff member assigned to be a part of the Transportation Team each day who will be stationed near the Parks & Recreation Office. They will read the campers name and we will use a radio system to call down to the Function Hall with the Campers name so that staff inside can get that camper ready.
* When parents pull into Wasserman Park, they will drive directly down the hill towards the tennis courts where you will take a right hand turn and travel up the park road to the Function Hall. Morning Drop Off and Afternoon Pickup will take place directly in front of the Function Hall.
* A staff member will greet the family at your vehicle. We will make every effort to get campers in and out of vehicles as quickly as possible.

Morning Extended Care Drop Off:

* For morning drop-off, parents will park in the Visitor Parking Lot and will walk their child down to the Day Camp Office to check in. Parents must accompany their children on the first day of each week to check in. Campers will NOT be admitted to camp on their first days without a parent/guardian present.
* The Camp Staff will check your child in and direct them to join the Extended Care staff. Once the majority of morning extended care participants have arrived they will head down the hill to play on the playground until the regular camp day begins at 8:00 am.

Afternoon Extended Care Pickup:

Extended care pickup will occur at the Day Camp Office where parents will show their ID to the staff member assigned to this task. They will radio down to the Staff in the extended care program to send the child up the hill.

STAFF SUPERVISON RATIO’S AT CAMP  
The following minimum staffing ratios for cabin groups will be maintained at all times.

* 5 Year Olds 1 Staff Member for every 6 Campers
* 6 - 8 Year Olds 1 Staff Member for every 8 Campers
* 9 – 14 Year Olds 1 Staff Member for every 10 Campers

At the waterfront there will be 1 Lifeguard for every 25 participants in the Swim Zone as well as 1 counselor for every 10 kids in boating activities. There should never be an occasion where this ratio is not met and there should always be at least 2 Staff members at all times in Camp activities.

SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

We have a legal obligation to report ANY suspected incidence of abuse and neglect involving the children in our care. If a child tells you he or she has been abused physically, emotionally, mentally or sexually, you must immediately report it to the Camp Director. . Don’t hesitate or waste any time. By learning some of the warning signs of abuse and neglect, you'll be more alert to a child who may need help.

Signs of Neglect:

* Chronically dirty or unbathed
* Chronic program absences
* Dress inadequate for weather
* Left alone
* Left in the care of siblings too young to baby-sit
* Often fatigued - even falling asleep in program
* Hunger
* Self-destructive feelings or behavior

Signs of Sexual Abuse:

* Difficulty walking or sitting
* Pain or itching in the genital area
* Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
* Frequent complaints of stomachaches or headaches
* Chronic depression
* Withdrawal
* Feeling threatened by physical contact
* Inappropriate sex play or premature understanding of sex.

Signs of Emotional Injury:

* Inability to play as most children do
* Sleep problems
* Antisocial behavior or behavioral extremes
* Lags in emotional and intellectual growth

Signs Of Physical Abuse:

* Bruises, welts, burns that cannot be sufficiently explained
* Injuries on places where children don't usually get hurt (the back, neck, back of legs, face) Repeated injuries
* Withdrawn, fearful or extreme behavior

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE: WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT?

Discipline and guidance shall be consistent and based upon an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child. Discipline should be directed to the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and individual within it

In today’s climate of litigation and awareness of child abuse it is extremely important that we understand the concepts of punishment and discipline and that we are thoroughly prepared to deal with the misbehavior of children.

We have prepared the following rules when dealing with a child who is misbehaving.

IF CORRECTIVE MEASURES MUST BE TAKEN WITH CHILDREN THERE ARE ONLY TWO CHOICES. TIME-OUT AND

RE-DIRECTION.

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER PHYSICALLY DISCIPLINE A CHILD.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO USE WITH YOUR BUNK

There are SEVERAL different ways to manage behaviors within your own bunk. It is up to you to pick the way that works best for you. If you are comfortable managing the behaviors of your campers, then you will be able to have the most fun you can with them!

Positive Reinforcement Strategies

* Individual: You could keep a list of each camper that you have and tally or make smiley faces for earning a certain number of tallies or smiley faces have a reward for each child. The rewards will be based on what will motivate your camper to maintain his or her behavior. This will be best decided by the counselor, because you’re the one that knows your campers best! If you need something to make this happen, please ask head staff.
* Whole Group: As another option, you can have all kids work as a team toward earning a reward. Again, it is up to you how you feel is the best way to keep track of this. If you need or would like supplies, please ask head staff.
* Now let’s think of some consequences and rewards that are appropriate at Camp Naticook… and when trying to solve problem behavior– always allow for a choice example “You have a choice to make. You can use kind words when playing kickball or you can sit on the sidelines and skip the activity today.”

Tips for De-Escalating Kids

Don’t take it personally

* Understand that children all have “baggage” from their life
* When children unload on you (refusal, yelling, defiance, etc) remember to take their baggage on yourself. If you take their baggage personally, you may react in anger or frustration
* Acknowledge the child’s feelings, “I hear that your frustrated about…”
* Give specific directions to the child. “I need you to…Thank you for…”
* Walk away and wait for compliance or refusal. Remember that when kids are agitated, it may take some time for them to comply (or even answer you without attitude). Give them the physical space & time they need to calm themselves down. Don’t talk to them about their being agitated unless it’s for a safety concern. Also, ask other kids to leave them along for the time being.

When you confront children about a behavior: (PEP – avoiding an audience)

* P: Privacy - Talk to Kids away from their peers
* E: Eye Contact - You’re not responsible for kids looking at you, but try to look them in the eyes.
* P: Proximity - Have conversations in low voice tones

Avoiding Power struggles in the lunchroom:

* Say to a child, “Please keep your voice down. Thank you for keeping your voice down”
* Walk away
* Child is likely to roll his/her eyes or make faces behind your back. Act like you didn’t hear it or see it.
* If the child continues to act up, document behavior.

Positively reinforce appropriate behavior:

* Most kids respond positively to rewards-based incentives . As a group, decide what rewards the kids want to work towards & clearly define what the “Good Behaviors” are. (I.E – Bug Stickers).

Time Out (Take a Break):

Can be a very powerful way to reduce inappropriate behavior. It should be used as infrequently as possible since overuse diminishes its effectiveness. It should not be used for small minor problems. Time out can be used for frequent behavior such as tantrums, hurting others, refusal to follow instructions, shoving and other dangerous behaviors. Using “Time Out” effectively requires good judgment and self-discipline on the part of the counselor.

Rules to follow when giving a Time Out:

* A proper Time Out place is chosen ahead of time Children need to understand ahead of time what “Time Out” procedures will be and the kinds of behavior that lead to its use.
* The duration of “Time Out” should be no more than one minute per age of the child at the maximum. Never leave the child unsupervised during “Time Out.”
* The last minute may require silence on the part of the child or they may continue to sit there until they are quiet for the last minute. Avoid engaging in power struggles around the issue, especially since children who do not want to rejoin the group may well use this to their advantage.
* “Time Out” should be used immediately and consistently for aggressive, inappropriate behavior.
* “Time Out” should not be enforced with anger. It is a consequence of the child’s actions. If he/she cannot show appropriate behavior in the group then he/she must leave for a short time so that he/she can calm down, get his/her act together and return a more cooperative member of the group. Remember to let the child know that the behavior is the issue, not that the child is bad.

Waterfront procedures for Camp Staff

First Aid Station: located at the picnic tables behind the beach

If you or a camper is injured anywhere in the lower ½ of camp this is the closest area to go for care. Any lifeguard or swim instructor can provide first aid. Only those certified in First Aid (with current certification on file) may use the materials in the first aid kits. Universal precautions must be used. Incident reports must be filled out when *ANY* care is given. *Counselors may not take out first aid materials even for their own use. Certified staff must handle all materials and provide all care! It’s their job – let them take care of you! ☺*

Swim Lessons:

When you bring the campers down for lessons they should be brought to the grassy area between the picnic tables and the basketball court to get ready for lessons. Have them take off their socks, shoes and extra clothes. (They should only bring themselves on the beach. Everything else stays in the grassy area please!) If they need to go to the bathroom please encourage them to do this prior to the start of the lesson. Please keep them away from the First Aid Station unless they need care. If you have campers that need a new bracelet they will need to see the Waterfront Director. If you have a camper who has arrived after the first day of camp and does not have a swim instructor bring him/her to the Waterfront Director for testing.

The swim instructors will call for their students when lessons begin. No campers should be on the beach or near the water without their swim instructor. Campers with 1:1 aides will need to come to lessons with their 1:1 aide. Aides will need to be present for the entire lesson (on the dock or in the water if the camper requires the support). Other counselors should remain on the beach. They may be needed to take kids to the bathroom, nurse or otherwise assist with the campers if it becomes necessary.

At the conclusion of your campers’ swim lesson please help them gather all belongings before they leave (towels, socks, clothes, etc.) Younger campers may need assistance putting on their socks and shoes before moving to their next activity.

Swim Lesson Bracelets:

Blue bracelet: camper can swim in the shallow section

Orange bracelet: camper can swim in the middle section or shallow section

Yellow bracelet: camper can swim in any section (includes rafts)

Buddy Board Procedures:

The buddy Board system is a new structured system used to keep track of how many swimmers come in and out of the swimming areas. The buddy board is split into three sections with a drawn out layout of the waterfront. The buddy board is split up by camper bracelet colors, blue, orange, and yellow. Whenever a camper enters the waterfront they must check in and put their tag on the buddy board where they will be in the water. The tags are numbered 1-120 and each camper has their own number. When a camper exits the waterfront they must take their tag off of the board. This system will be used during swim lesson times to get the campers familiar with the system for when it is lake fun on Fridays. In the event of an emergency this structured system should provide us with a timely response to a missing camper at the waterfront.

* A buddy check is signaled by two long whistle blasts, in which campers will exit the water and sit at their section
* At this time lifeguards will do a head count of the campers in their section

*Do a HEAD COUNT before you leave the waterfront*

Boating:

Bring your campers to the boat house at the beginning of the activity period. Everyone (counselors and campers) will need to put on a properly fitted PFD (personal flotation device). The boating instructors can assist you with this. The counselor will need to go boating with his or her bunk. There has to be a boating instructor, lifeguard or counselor in every boat that leaves the waterfront. Large bunks may need 2 counselors to go boating with the bunk. CITs do not count as a counselor but they can certainly go w/ the group. NO CAMPERS should be near the boats or water without the boating instructors.

Boating instructors will remind your campers of safe boating rules and expectations before each departure. They will also review paddling technique. Boating should be a fun yet safe experience. Canoes should never be tipped without prior planning by the boating instructors in conjunction with the Waterfront Director. All canoes must stay together and all instructions from the boating instructor must be followed.

*Do a HEAD COUNT before you leave the waterfront*

During Buddy Check (2 whistle blasts) we ask that all counselors and CIT’s stand up.

Usually there will be 2 buddy checks during free swim. At the conclusion of free swim please remind your campers to put away anything they were using (noodles, kickboards, sand pails, etc) and then have them CHECK OUT of the beach area with a Head Counselor.

LOST SWIMMER PROCEDURE:

* Report lost swimmer immediately to WATERFRONT DIRECTOR.
* The Lifeguard will issue 3 long whistle blasts.
* Waterfront is quickly cleared.
* Guards, instructors and qualified staff begin water search while Senior Counselors search the shallow section of the water and Junior Counselors get with their bunks on the beach, count the campers and wait for the head staff that has the clipboard to ask for a count from them.
* If all children are not accounted for during check in on beach, Water Search is continued until lost swimmer is found, body is recovered or until Water Search Team is completely exhausted and cannot continue. Waterfront Director will contact 911 and then proceeds to call the Camp office on portable radio to notify Nurse & Camp Director.
* The Camp Director must then activate the missing camper and contact the Parks & Recreation Director by Radio and/or by Cell phone. Junior Counselors assemble at Function Hall with campers while senior counselors search camp.

LOST CAMPER PROCEDURE:

A lost camper procedure is somewhat different from a lost bather, in that the ENTIRE CAMP must be searched.

* In the event of a lost camper; a call will go out on the radio using a CODE Phrase. This way it doesn't cause complete panic if a camper overhears this. The code word would be THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH ORANGUTANS.
* Campers at activities will be quickly and quietly brought to the Function Hall by one Counselor from the bunk. Once in the function hall, find a quiet spot and take a head count of your campers. The Director or Assistant Director will then verify that each bunk is present and has all campers accounted for.
* The remaining Counselors will be directed to search the Camp and then report to the Camp Director that their areas have been searched.

*Search assignments:*

* Function Hall: (keep the kids quiet and calm! Check attendance against your bunk list)
  + Assistant Director, and all Junior Counselors
* Cabins/Around Cabins their Cabins:
  + Senior Counselors that are not specialists
* Athletic Field, Function Hall (outside and downstairs), Playground, Arts and Crafts
  + Arts and Crafts Counselors
* Day Camp Office/Nurse’s Office:
  + Nurse – will go to nurse’s office and wait with radio to provide care where necessary
* Boathouse, Guard Shack & Waterfront and trails up to sports fields
  + Waterfront Director & Lifeguards
* Archery range
  + Archery Counselor
* Theater
  + Nature Counselors
* Naticook Road, Parks and Recreation Office
  + Camp Director after checking in at Function Hall

SPECIAL CONTINGENCY PLANS:

For children who fail to arrive in the morning (via parent drop off or camp provided transportation)

* double check attendance and/or roll call
* call parents/guardians or other contact name provided on the camper’s application forms

For children missing from the point of pick up at the end of the day:

* double check attendance and/or roll call
* check with Main Office to see if camper was picked up early by parents
* check camp site in accordance with your lost camper plan

For unregistered children arriving at camp:

* check with the child’s parents if still on site.
* obtain contact information from forms (if available)
* call the child’s parent/guardian if the child’s phone number is obtained.
* If no contact info available, then the Merrimack Police Department will be contacted to pick the child up.
* A CHILD WHO IS NOT REGISTERED TO ATTEND CAMP IS NOT ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY PROGRAMS! THEY SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE CAMP DIRECTOR WHO WILL FOLLOW THE STEPS FOR UNREGISTERED CHILDREN ARRIVING AT CAMP, AS LISTED ABOVE.

FIRE DRILLS

Each building will have the emergency exits posted. Once every session, within the first two days of each session, a fire drill will be conducted in case of an actual emergency. Campers should be aware of the fire drill procedures prior to the start of the drill and should have a safety review at the completion of each drill. The Camp Directors will administer the fire drill, which will be indicated by blowing air horns.

1. Procedure: In the event of an actual fire, the following actions should be taken.
2. Dial 911. Do not panic, it is contagious. If you panic the campers will panic also. Remove all campers from the area. Know where the fire extinguishers are in the building.
3. Counselors should gather their children and exit the building through the closest door. The campers and staff should proceed in an orderly manner to the designated meeting spot. Counselors should bring their group list to verify attendance.
4. Counselors should accompany campers who happen to be in their area to this meeting place. DO NOT send them back to their groups. When arriving at the meeting area, accompany those campers to their group counselors.
5. Groups will be allowed to return to activities at the Camp Director’s signal. This signal will come from the Fire Department and/or the Police Department.

In the event of a fire, all camp staff should gather on the LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD CLOSEST TO THE PARKS & RECREATION OFFICE and wait for further instructions.

DISASTER PLAN / CAMP LOCK DOWN

In the case of any of the following disasters, all groups will report to the Function Hall of the Camp. Emergencies to be considered include:

\*Flash Floods \*Tornadoes \*Hurricanes \*Violent Thunder Storms \*Terrorist Acts

1. Procedure:

* Camp Director’s will be notified by Matt Casparius or the Parks & Recreation Department that camp should go into a Lock Down procedure.
* All campers and staff will go to the camp function hall.
* At this time a head count will be conducted of all campers and staff.
* The Camp Director will call the Recreation Department to confirm that the Camp is locked down; that all campers are accounted for and await further instructions

LIGHTNING SAFETY:  
Thunderstorms during the Summer are a common occurrence. Should a storm arise, listen for thunder and keep an eye out for lightning. Thunder requires clearing of the water.

* Lifeguards should dispatch to both ends of the beach to ensure that all patrons are aware that they need to get out of the water.
* Cover the equipment if necessary with tarps (or bring inside the boathouse).
* Waterfront Staff should go inside the bathhouse to wait until the storm passes.
* 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder or bolt of lightning the waterfront can reopen and Lifeguards can resume their posts.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

It is not the responsibility of general camp staff to treat injuries to themselves or to campers without oversight by the Camp Health Care Supervisor. Camp Staff ARE TO DO the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

* Ensure that campers wash their hands before every meal and at other times when needed.
* Ensure that campers visit the Health Center when necessary.
* Communicate honestly and openly to camp leadership and the Camp Health Staff about health and safety concerns in regard to their campers, other staff, and themselves.
* Ensure that campers are reapplying sunscreen throughout the day.
* In the event of a significant injury or illness one counselor should notify the Camp Health Supervisor and comfort the injured individual. The second counselor should take all the campers away from the situation so that they cannot watch the camper being treated.
* If it a minor injury, the injured or ill camper can be brought to the health center for treatment by the health care supervisor.

Equipment & Supplies

It is Naticook Day Camp’s policy that health-care equipment and supplies, except that which has been portioned out and assigned by the Camp Health Center in the form of First-Aid Kits, be stored in the Health Center under the care of the Camp Health Care Supervisor. S/he is also responsible for providing the Camp Director with timely notice if supplies are running low so that additional items may be purchased. The Camp Director will provide a supply request list of all supplies to the Director of Parks & Recreation.

All supplies and equipment will be stored in the Health Office under the direct care of the Camp Health Care Supervisor and locked at all times when s/he is absent unless a designee is present in his/her place.

OUT OF CAMP TRIP PROCEDURES:

When out of camp, campers and staff should remember that they are representing Camp Trek and the Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department. All camp rules apply in terms of behavior, expectations and safety. Field trips will only be run for campers in Trek or the Counselor in Training Program and will be run only by the pre designated Camp Trek Coordinator & Senior Counselor(s).

Trip destinations will vary throughout the summer. Each week the Camp Trek Coordinator will be provided with a travel binder that details camper and trip information. All field trips have been reserved ahead of time but it is the responsibility of the Trek Coordinator to ensure the safety of all campers and handle all day of logistics for the trip. Basic information on the trips will be provided to you by the Program Coordinator but it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with every trip destination and that sites rules and regulations.

Supervision of Campers:

Careful attendance is taken before leaving camp, if a registered camper has not showed up for camp a call should be made to the parents. The bus will always depart on time and will leave campers behind if they do not arrive on time.

Supervision on field trips is up to the discretion of the Trek Coordinator. It is expected that campers will travel in groups of no less than 2 children and that attendance will be taken hourly. If you choose to let the campers have more independence at the trip destinations it’s your responsibility to create regular check in times and locations and share this information with campers. Designated boundaries should always be made clear by the staff to all campers. Always remember to count faces not heads.

Safety in Public, Walking on Public Streets and Use of Public Bathrooms:

Campers should take all necessary and safety precautions they can when out of camp. They should cross the streets on crosswalks and be aware of traffic. When using public restrooms campers must use the buddy system.

Procedures:

1. Staff:
   1. All trips are to be run and organized by the Camp Trek Coordinator and at least 1 senior camp counselor. The camper to staff ratio is 1:10.
   2. All Camp Trek staff members must have a current CPR/ First Aid Certification.
2. Pre-Trip Orientation:
   1. On Monday morning of each week the Camp Trek Coordinator will be provided with a trip binder. It is their reasonability to familiarize themselves with the trip destinations for that week and make sure campers have all the appropriate documents in order to attend exp. waivers, etc.
   2. Trip Binder will include the following information each week. Coordinator & Counselors should review all this materials each Monday morning.
      1. Attendance Sheet
      2. Master Roster
      3. Trip Destination Information/ Details
      4. Trip Invoices, Checks & Payment Information
      5. Waivers
      6. All camper medical documents
      7. Accident/ Incident Reports
      8. Contact Information/ Important Phone Numbers
      9. Staff Training Manual
   3. All emergency medication for campers will be given to Trek Coordinator. All medication should be picked up from the Camp Nurse with instructions on how to administer on Tuesday morning before departing for trip.
   4. On Monday morning Trek Coordinator should meet with campers and discuss the following information with them
      1. Locations & climate/ weather for trips
      2. Proper clothing and footwear for each trip
      3. Rules and regulations regarding outside contact, behavior, restrooms, etc.
      4. Emergency procedures
      5. Missing Waiver forms
      6. Reminder to bring lunch on field trip days
      7. Hand out T-Shirts and explain they must be worn on all trip days
3. Before departing for trips Trek Coordinator should check all first aid supplies and restock any missing supplies. Trek Coordinator should also ensure that designated trip phone is charged, turned on and working properly before departing. This phone is to be used only for camp related business and should never be used for any personal reason.
4. Loading & Unloading Campers: This is the job of the Trek Coordinator, each step must be followed every time campers are transports to a field trip. Motor should be off for loading and unloading campers.
   1. Count all campers as they board the vehicle
   2. Take attendance by name once on the bus & double count campers
   3. Have counselors disperse evenly throughout the bus
   4. Give orientation of vehicle rules/ expectations to campers
      * 1. All body parts must remain inside bus at all times
        2. Remain seated at all times when not loading/ unloading
        3. Noise level must stay low to avoid distracting the driver
        4. Keep the walkway/ aisle in the bus clear of objects
        5. Nothing should be thrown out of the vehicle
        6. Emergency exits and windows must remain clear of objects
        7. No trash should be left on the bus after departing
        8. Share any additional rules the bus driver might have
5. Medical Emergencies: While out of camp, if at any time a camper or staff needs emergency medical attention the following procedures should be taken:
6. Follow basic first aid procedures (airways, bleeding, circulation)
7. Call 911 or local emergency number if needed
8. Contact Camp office
9. Have staff member accompany camper in emergency vehicle to hospital
10. Make appropriate arrangements for the rest of the group to return to camp
11. The Director, Assistant Director or Camp Nurse will notify the parents
12. If the incident brings in media attention the Parks & Recreation Director will make all appropriate commentary to press. NO staff will be allowed to comment on the accident or injury.
13. After returning to camp complete detailed accident report
14. Accident will be investigated by Parks & Recreation staff and Camp Director to make sure staff were not at fault for accident
15. Illness: If an illness occurs while on the trip please following these procedures.
    1. Contact camp and camp nurse to determine if trip should return to camp (based on distance and level of illness)
    2. If emergency call 911 and have camper or staff transported to the hospital. One staff member must accompany child to the hospital.
16. Missing Campers: All campers will be counted periodically throughout the day and before returning to the bus at the end of the trip. Campers should be assigned a buddy at the beginning of each trip and are expected to stay with this buddy at all times. In the event of a missing camper, bring your whole group together and sit someplace safe. Divide the staff so at least 1 person remains with the group while others perform the initial search. Campers SHOULD NOT be involved in a search. Notify the security guards and/ or the police. Call camp ASAP to notify the Camp Director. Other campers and staff should be questioned to ascertain the missing campers last known whereabouts and their disposition at the time they were last seen. Staff should check all logical local locations of the campers. Once police arrive they will take over and you are to assist them in their efforts to locate the missing camper.
17. Tardiness on Returning to Camp: All out of camp day trips should plan to return to camp by 3:45 pm. In the event that a trip is going to return late Trek Coordinator should contact camp with an estimated arrival time.
18. Money: For most of our trips it will be the responsibly of the Trek Coordinator to pay for the trip when you arrive at the destination. You will be provided with a check at the beginning of the day by a staff member from the Parks & Recreation office. It is your responsibly to hold on to and deliver the check. If the check is for a higher amount and you are given a partial refund at the field trip site the Trek Coordinator should return this money to the Parks & Recreation Office at the end of the day.
19. Bus Transportation: The bus and the bus driver typically change every day and you will want to be sure to get the drivers number before you get off the bus at the trip destination. Make sure you pre-determine what time you will be meeting the bus for departure and where you will be meeting them.

Bus Break Down: In the event that the bus breaks down during your travel to or from the trip please contact the Camp Office immediately and make them aware of the issue. Unload the bus and put campers in safe place away from traffic. Have one counselor stay with the campers at all time and the other one stay with the bus and driver.

If the bus is in an accident you must access the severity of the accident and act accordingly. If any staff or campers are injured follow the Medical Emergencies procedure above and notify the Camp Office ASAP and call 911.

1. Pre- Trip/ At Camp Activities: Some trips will not take up the entire day and will leave you will a few hours of time to fill with activities. It is your responsibility to plan and implement organized game and activities during this time. The camp office will not be coming up with activities for you. On Monday and Fridays the Camp Director will schedule you activities and you will participate in the camp special event on Fridays.
2. Cell Phone Policy: Camp Trek will be issued a trip phone at the beginning of the summer. This phone is the Trek Coordinator’s responsibility and should be kept him/her at all times while on field trips. The phone will be pre-programed with all the important phone numbers. This phone is to be used only for camp business and should never be used to make personal calls. It is the Trek Coordinators responsibly to ensure the phone is plugged in and charging at the end of each day. Upon arrival at trip destinations it is expected that counselors will not be using their cell phones, your job is to have full attention on your campers and ensure their safety. Pictures or videos of campers should NEVER be posted on any personal social media accounts. The only place photos should be posted is on the Parks & Recreation Department Facebook Page.

NATICOOK DAY CAMP & CAMP TREK

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK & ORIENTATION AFFIDAVIT

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

This Naticook Day Camp & Camp Trek Employee Handbook describes important information about Naticook Day Camp, Camp Trek, the Parks & Recreation Department and the Town of Merrimack. I understand that I should consult with my supervisor if I have any questions that are not answered in the handbook.

I understand and acknowledge that this handbook is not a contract of employment. I have received the handbook and I understand that it is my responsibility to read, agree to and follow the policies contained in

this handbook.

Employee’s Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employee’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_