

Resources Guide for UMaine Summer Youth Camps

Training and Policies

Any staff member involved with a summer camp at a University facilities must undergo training prior to the start of the camp session. In addition to this Summer-Camp Safety Training, a staffer must also complete Annual Basic Safety Training (Blackboard link here).

In addition, a staffer must become familiar with several University policies. These include:

- Sexual Harassment: <http://umaine.edu/studemp/resources/policies/sexual-harassment-policy/>
- Workplace Harassment and Violence: <http://umaine.edu/hr/files/2013/12/WorkplaceHarassmentandViolence-Policy.pdf>
- Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure: <http://umaine.edu/eo/complaintsandconcerns/>
- Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy: <http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section401/>
- Guidelines Concerning Consenting Relationships: <http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/guidelines-regarding-consenting-relationships/>
- Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Retaliation: <http://umaine.edu/eo/policies-procedures/sex-discrimination-sexual-harassment-sexual-assault-relationship-violence-stalking-and-retaliation/>
- Opportunity Hire Program: <http://umaine.edu/eo/policies-procedures/sex-discrimination-sexual-harassment-sexual-assault-relationship-violence-stalking-and-retaliation/>
- Procedure for Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities: <http://umaine.edu/eo/files/2012/12/Accommodations-Procedure.pdf>

Risk Management

There are many risks inherent during a typical summer camp. These include:

- Sports injuries;
- Lightning;
- Heat or cold injuries;
- Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction);
- Lost camper.

Less obvious risks include interpersonal, emotional and behavioral risks such as:

- Bullying;
 - Food-related issues;
 - Sexual behavior;
 - Learning disabilities (either disclosed or undisclosed).
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Day vs. Overnight Camps

Day and overnight camps have many of the same problems of which staffers must be aware. But overnight camps offer special challenges, such as homesickness, dietary fussiness and contentious roommate interactions, with which staffers must deal as well.

Staff Code of Conduct

1. A camp staffer should never be alone with a single child in a way that cannot be observed by others.
2. Youth should be within visual and/or hearing supervision of camp staff at all times. Exceptions to visual supervision include bathroom or changing-room use. Under these circumstances, camp staff should respect youth privacy but remain within hearing supervision by waiting nearby.
3. Under no circumstances are camp staff or directors to release a youth to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parental authorization is to be kept on file).
4. Never violate a child's personal rights. Examples of child abuse include:
 - physical abuse (to strike, spank, shake, or slap);
 - verbal abuse (to humiliate, degrade, or threaten);
 - sexual abuse (an inappropriate touch or verbal exchange);
 - mental abuse (to shame, withhold love, or cruelty);
 - neglect (to withhold food, water, or basic care).
5. When in public areas of campus, camp staffers shall ensure that suspicious or unknown individuals do not occupy the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities. Staffers shall stand in the doorway (or in the bathroom if a multi-stall facility) while youth use the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the youth and protection for the camp staff (not being alone with a youth). When camp staff assists younger youth, a door to the facility must remain open. No youth, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone.
6. Camp staff shall to respond to youth with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, or culture.

7. Camp staff are to respect a youth's rights to not be touched in a way that makes him or her feel uncomfortable, and preserving his or her right to say "no." Youth are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would normally be covered by a bathing suit.
 8. Staffers shall refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others.
 9. Staffers are to be positive role models for youth by maintaining attitudes of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
 10. Only University-approved vehicles are to be used to transport youth. All drivers must be pre-approved by their respective department according to departmental procedure.
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Staff Responsibilities

*Remember, the **SAFETY** of the children is your **FIRST** responsibility!*

1. Focus your entire attention on the safety and supervision of the children when you are with a group. The first step for a camp staff member to understand is the needs of his/her campers. Then do a head count so you know how many campers are in your care for that day or week.
2. Use prep time or off time for communication with other staff members. Do not spend time talking with other staff when you are supervising the children. Staff focus must remain on campers, not on socializing with peers.
3. When there is more than one staff person in an area, you should be spread out so that you can supervise the whole area better. This is especially important on the recreation field, near the water, on hikes, and any other large areas you may be using.
4. When you are talking to or playing with one child, attempt to keep your eyes on the whole group. If possible, station yourself so that you can see the whole group easily.
5. Do not engage in competition with the campers. Your role is supervision, not domination.
6. Campers shall never be left alone. Make sure a buddy system is in place with the campers at all times. Remember, when you give permission for a child to go to the bathroom or leave the activity area, to make sure they have a buddy with them. Make sure the child returns, with buddy, in a reasonable length of time.
7. Always, practice and enforce the Rule of Three (never be alone with a camper, always have campers with buddies or have another staff member present). It is the appearance of impropriety that can cause trouble.
8. When you take an age-appropriate group that requires additional supervision from one area to another, one counselor should be leading the group (the lead) and another at the end (the sweep). Only staff shall be in the lead and sweep positions. Don't let children run ahead of you to rec. field or other facilities. Always check area before moving on (Leave No Trace).
9. Before taking a group outside for any amount of time, check with the group to see if anyone needs to use the bathroom, fill water bottles, tie shoes, pick up belongings, etc. Watch for potential

trouble before it starts. If you think something the students are doing looks dangerous, speak up and stop them. If they argue that someone else lets them do it, tell them that may be so, but you're in charge now and you don't think it's safe. You can discuss the situation later with the rest of the staff, but it's always best to follow your "gut feeling" for the moment.

10. Busy children are easier to supervise than bored ones. Be sure that the children in your group have plenty to do. Help them get involved. Be prepared with time-filling activities for unexpected downtimes.
11. Any playing area or equipment that appears to be a hazard should be brought to the attention of a program coordinator or camp director if the problem cannot be taken care of by the staff.
12. All staffers must wear a shirt of some type when coaching/instructing during camp operation and or wear a camp credential that include a photo ID.
13. Be aware of temperature and water intake of campers to prevent heat cramps, stroke and exhaustion. Utilize shade and water breaks to help campers stay healthy and hydrated!
14. Personal cell-phone use is not allowed during camp hours. If you need to make a personal phone call, please do it on designated break times.
15. Touching: There cannot be any inappropriate touching between staff and camper or staff on staff. This can include hugging, rubbing, hitting, etc.
16. Engaging: Staff must be engaged with campers at all times during camp hours. At no time should you leave campers unattended.

Locker Room Procedures

1. Children are not to be in a locker room unsupervised.
2. Camp staff should not be alone with a child. Two staff members shall be present at all times or the activity being supervised shall include more than two people in the space.

Check-in and Check-out

1. All campers will be signed in when they arrive.
2. **DO NOT** allow anyone (unknown or known) to remove a camper from camp without the express permission of the camp director.
3. Staffers must refer all visitors to a supervisor or the camp director.
4. If a camper is taken from camp without the approval of the camp director, get a description of all persons involved if possible (hair, clothing, height, license plate, etc.). Immediately notify the UMaine police and then the camp director.

Missing Child

There are several steps to follow when a child is reported missing:

1. When a member/visitor reports a child is missing, obtain a detailed description of the child (name, age, height, hair color, eye color, names of individuals with legal rights to child, etc.), what he or she is wearing, and last known location and activate your camp's missing child alarm system.
2. The staff taking the description notifies the manager that there is a missing child and then calls the nearest law enforcement office (911).
3. Manager should utilize available staff to monitor the front and rear entrances.
4. No accompanied (without proper ID) or unaccompanied child is allowed to exit the building for 10 minutes. Entry to the building will continue as normal.
5. All other available staff searches for the child.
6. Alert professional staff (phone or on-site).
7. If the child is found and appears to have been lost and unharmed, the child is reunited with the fellow campers.
8. If the child is found and accompanied by someone other than a parent or legal guardian, reasonable efforts to delay their departure will be used without putting the child, staff, or visitors at risk. Law enforcement will be notified and given details about the person accompanying the child.
9. When the child is safely back in camp, the search procedures will be halted.

Walking Across Campus

1. When walking somewhere on campus, sidewalks and crosswalks must be used at all times.
2. When walking with youth, make sure there is a staff member walking in the front and back of the line to ensure that all campers are safe and accounted for.
3. Use the crosswalks with caution. When using the crosswalk be aware that oncoming cars may not slow, even when campers are crossing. Cross as an entire group. Do not allow campers to stop in a crosswalk. Watch for turning vehicles that may not yield to pedestrians.

Discipline

1. The misbehavior of one camper, or a group of campers, should not be allowed to impact negatively on the experiences of others.
2. Bullying, thievery, drugs, alcohol, and disrespectful behavior are not tolerated.
3. In cases where a disciplinary matter is serious or recurring, the parents shall be contacted and requested to take part in the resolution

Medical Emergencies

1. If you or someone else requires emergency medical attention, call your emergency number.
2. Provide first aid to the victim **ONLY** if you are properly trained and it is part of your job responsibilities and you have the appropriate supplies.
3. Bodily fluid spill protocol:
4. Participants that are bleeding must leave the activity until bleeding is totally stopped.
5. In order to return to the activity, a camper's soiled clothing must be removed and staff will find a clothing alternative.
6. The wound must be cared for appropriately before returning to any activity.
7. All potential exposure incidents shall be reported to your supervisor or the camp director immediately.
8. If you encounter what you suspect to be blood or other bodily fluids, **DO NOT CLEAN IT UP** unless you have proper training and PPE (keep others away).
9. In all cases, promptly notify your supervisor and aid them in completion of the workplace injury report

Severe weather

1. Check weather constantly before doing any outdoor activities.
2. If caught outdoors during severe weather, find closest shelter.

Fire alarms

1. Gather campers together
2. Do headcount
3. Exit through the nearest available exit

Emergency Action Plans

Every summer day and overnight camp must have a written Emergency Action Plan. You will receive training on your plan from your supervisor.

Emergency Action Plans include the following information:

- Types of hazards present
- Alarm systems and how to sound the alarm

- Evacuation routes
- Rally points
- Use of emergency equipment
- Reporting emergencies

Media/public relations

Staffers should refer media to the University's Division of Marketing and Communications for press passes.