



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Basic Guidelines
Helpful Tips
Resources

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Introduction

Dear Cabin Leader:

We are so glad you are here serving with us this week. The Program Volunteers consider it a privilege to serve alongside you in camp ministry—there is nothing like it! We are here to support and guide you throughout the week.

We expect that you are mature Christ followers, and we believe you will lead by example this week. Below are a few guidelines that may answer questions or serve as reminders as you begin your journey as a Cabin Leader this week.

We look forward to getting to know you and helping in any way we can.

In Christ,

Your Program Volunteers

Content Covered in This Guide:

- Basic Guidelines and Expectations
- Dealing with Specific Discipline Issues
- Listening Intelligently to Campers' Problems
- Resources for your cabin (patch verses and cabin clean up)



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Basic Guidelines



SAFETY IS ALWAYS A TOP PRIORITY

- Pay close attention to the weather. For example, do not head down to the lake if conditions look unsafe or questionable. Weather can change quickly near the lake, and it is a long walk back to camp.
- Once campers arrive, no cars are allowed in camp areas.
- Practice good campfire safety and use common sense. Watch campers carefully around the fire, especially when handling flaming marshmallows or sharp roasting sticks. Campers should always walk around the outside of the fire circle to avoid tripping near the fire. Be an example of safe campfire behavior, and do not do anything that could be dangerously imitated by campers.
- Do not send sick campers alone to the nurse or back to their cabins. If a camper is not feeling well, they should be accompanied to the nurse by another camper or a Cabin Leader.
- Know your campers' health histories as much as possible, including bee allergies, food allergies, cardiac conditions, or any other important medical concerns.

PROMOTE AN ATMOSPHERE OF FUN

- If there is a long line, make the wait enjoyable by singing camp songs, playing games, or engaging campers in conversation and activities.
 - Help staff control line jumpers and keep activities orderly and fair for everyone.
 - Do not take away camp activities as punishment. This may be a camper's only opportunity to experience and enjoy these activities. Instead, use free time for "time-outs" at outdoor benches or tables when needed.
 - Get to know your campers' backgrounds so your expectations are fair and understanding. For example, if a camper has ADHD or comes from a difficult home situation, grace should abound!
 - If you have a fun or creative activity or photo opportunity, ask the video staff to capture the moment. Help create opportunities for fun, memorable video and photo content throughout the week.
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CABIN LEADER GUIDELINES

Basic Guidelines

CABIN LEADER ETIQUETTE

- Be with your campers. Be social, pull them into activities in fun ways, and help them connect with others. Watch for campers who may not fit in as easily and intentionally include them in the group.
- Make time for one-on-one conversations in open, public, but quiet places. Learn where your campers are spiritually. Find out if they already know Jesus, need encouragement in their faith, or if you may have the opportunity to lead them to the Lord.
- Do not be alone in cabins with campers. Campers should not be “hanging out” inside cabins unnecessarily. Stick to common areas whenever possible.
- It is often helpful to give your cabin just two main rules:
 1. No sleeping during the day.
 2. Treat others and their belongings the way you would want to be treated.
- Dress appropriately. Campers look up to you, so clothing should be modest, clean, and appropriate for the age group you are serving.
- Be discreet with campers’ personal struggles or information, such as bedwetting or family issues. Help them with care and dignity without making it public.
- Mandatory reporting must respect camper privacy. If you suspect abuse or neglect, go directly to the Program Director.
- During chapel times, position yourself where you can interact with campers and address behavior if necessary. Encourage campers to use the bathroom and get drinks before chapel begins. Avoid allowing unnecessary trips during teaching time whenever possible, as some campers may use the nurse or restroom as an excuse to leave.
- Cabin Leader meetings are mandatory. Please alternate with your co-Cabin Leader so that both of you attend one of the two meeting options during activity time. Both meetings cover the same material. Personal time off should take place during free time, not scheduled activities. If you leave the property, you must notify your Program Director and sign out.
- Appropriate behavior can be explained using the red, yellow, and green zones.
- Green Zone: fist bumps, high fives
- Yellow Zone: side hugs
- Red Zone: full-body hugs
- Remember that campers may come from many different denominations and church backgrounds. Focus on the core truths of the Christian faith and salvation through Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

CABIN LEADER GUIDELINES

Basic Guidelines

CABIN LEADER TESTIMONY

- Learn to give a clear testimony in approximately one minute.
- Focus on what Christ has done in your life, not just the sin that made you realize you needed Him.
- You may share about the moment you clearly understood salvation and accepted Christ, or another personal God story that points listeners toward Christ and a relationship with Him.
- Have a Bible verse chosen and, if possible, memorized.
- Leave campers with a takeaway or challenge that encourages them to accept Christ or share Him with others.
- Scan the QR code to access this resource to help prepare your God Story to share with others:

Website:

www.covchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2010/05/Telling-Your-Story-for-web.pdf

- When did it happen?
- Where were you?
- Who was involved?
- What happened? (Keep it concise.)
- What action did you take?
- What was the result or benefit?
- Share a verse.
- End with an invitation or challenge for the listener.



Scan to Access Website



CABIN LEADER GUIDELINES

Basic Guidelines

PACKAGES

- Packages will be brought to the cabin by parents or staff.
- You can distribute packages during cabin time.
- Make it fun—ask the camper to sing a song, share something funny, or do a quick challenge before opening their package.

GUIDELINES FOR PATCHES

- Stay up on patch work. Be encouraging and helpful throughout the week.
- Give grace to those who truly cannot memorize, and expect more from those you know are capable of more.
- We want every camper—and even Cabin Leaders—to be working on patches.
- Keep track of what campers are working on throughout the week.
- All patch work should be completed by the end of cabin time on Friday, and sheets should be brought to dinner.
- Cabin time is set aside for Bible memory and rest—not sleep or goofing around. Campers should be on their own bunks, quietly working on verses, reading, or journaling.



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Daily Verses

DAILY VERSES

- As part of the patch system, every camper will work on memorizing the same verses together each day. This should take place during the first part of cabin time each afternoon. We recommend working on the verses together as a group.

Suggestions for Group Memorization:

- Use the whiteboard and write out the entire verse. Repeat it together several times, then begin removing key words. Continue removing words until the verse is completely gone.
- Create motions or actions for key words and repeat the verse together several times using the motions.
- Use the stacking method. Picture large objects in your mind that represent key words. Mentally stack the objects in the order they appear in the verse as you say it out loud together.

EVENING BIBLE DISCUSSION

Each night, spend time as a cabin discussing the topics learned during chapel. We will provide discussion questions from the speaker to help guide the conversation.

Be sure to use Scripture throughout the discussion. Have campers look up and read verses aloud. Help them interpret what God is teaching through His Word and apply it to their lives.

Be a good listener, but also help guide the conversation to stay Christ-centered rather than focused only on personal stories.

Encourage campers who are naturally more talkative to listen well and allow others a chance to share. Also encourage quieter campers to participate by asking thoughtful questions and inviting them into the conversation.



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Music and Phone Policy

MUSIC POLICY FOR LGYC

All music played at Lake Geneva Youth Camp must either be by a Christian artist or be included on an approved LGYC Program Team Spotify playlist.

Songs used at camp should be appropriate for all ages and reflect the environment we are seeking to create. Songs should contain explicit language, inappropriate references, or mention of drugs/alcohol.

If you would like to add a song to an approved playlist, you must receive approval from the Program Director before using it at camp. Evening Bible Discussion:

PHONE & MEDIA POLICY

To help promote LGYC as “a place set apart for life-changing experiences in Christ,” we ask all campers, volunteers, and staff to limit phone and media use while at camp.

Campers:

- Campers are not permitted to have phones during their time at camp.

Cabin Leaders, Volunteers, and Staff:

- Campers should not see staff members using their phones except when necessary for camp-related responsibilities.
- Phone use should be limited to essential camp communication and operations.
- Phones should not be used in camper housing, chapel, bathrooms, meal times, or other program activities.

Phone Usage Guidelines:

- Staff and volunteers may carry their phones at the discretion of the Program Director and Program Volunteers.
- Phones should remain on silent and out of sight at all times unless needed for an emergency or camp-related purpose.
- Personal phone use should be kept to a minimum and reserved for appropriate times and locations away from campers.

Media Guidelines:

- Watching digital media, videos, streaming services, or other entertainment content is not permitted on camp property during Classic Camp.
- Any media used for training, educational, or program purposes must receive prior approval from the Camp Director.

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Expectations

HANDCRAFT EXPECTATIONS

- Respect the staff, space, supplies, and projects.
- Stay in designated camper areas.
- Water only, please.
- Put your name on all projects.
- Have fun and be creative!

NATURE CENTER EXPECTATIONS

- Stay in designated camper areas and be engaged with the activities.
- There are no bathrooms available in the Nature Center, so please use the restroom before coming.
- Be mindful of which items are okay to touch and which are for viewing only.
- Keep voices low, especially outdoors, so we don't disturb the animals.
- Campers must ask permission before entering the animal pen and must be accompanied by a Nature Center staff member at all times.

WATERFRONT EXPECTATIONS

- We need Cabin Leaders to help at the waterfront during free time. Some leaders should go down at the beginning of free time, some at halftime, and some stay for the entire session.
- Cabin Leaders are expected to swim with the campers.
- Please assist with buddy checks and help keep campers quiet and attentive during instructions.
- No roughhousing is allowed. Lead by example with safe and respectful behavior.
- Respect the lifeguards, serve as extra eyes for safety, and help campers hear and follow all instructions given by the lifeguards.



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Sharing the Gospel



G: God created us to be with Him. (Gen. 1-2)

O: Our sin separates us from God. (Gen. 3)

S: Sin cannot be removed by good deeds. (Gen 4 - Malachi)

P: Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again. (The Gospels)

E: Everyone who trusts in Christ alone, will have eternal life. (Acts-Jude)

L: Life with Jesus starts NOW, and lasts FOREVER!!!! (Rev.)



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Tips for Praying Aloud

“The prayers of the weakest saints may be useful to the greatest apostle.”
- John Owens

1. PLAN TO PRAY

Ephesians 6:18 says to pray at all times! Plan to pray at the start of events and before you eat. If you do not intend to pray, you likely never will. Be determined to lead in prayer.

2. PRAY FOR GOD’S HELP

In your private prayer, ask God for His help to guide you in your prayer. The Spirit will help you to pray for what is good. So, rely on Him to guide you!

3. PRAY SIMPLY

Use simple language when you pray. God does not need you to impress Him with your words. Pray plainly for what you need. “God, thank you for this beautiful day. Help us to be safe as we play Capture the Flag. Amen.” Teach your campers that even they can talk to God with simple words.

4. REMEMBER JESUS IS PRAYING TOO

The Bible tells us that we have assurance of Christ’s presence (Matthew 18:20) and the promise of His intercession (Hebrews 7:25). A Christian never prays alone. Take heart that Jesus prays with you.

A MODEL FOR PRAYER: P.R.A.Y.

P: Praise - Give God glory for who He is and what He’s done. (Our Father in heaven, holy is Your name.)

R: Repent - Ask for forgiveness for the ways you fell short. (Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who have sinned against us.)

A: Ask - Ask God for the things you need, and trust that He will provide. (Give us today our daily bread. /Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.)

Y: Yield - Submit your will to God’s and make His priorities your own. (Your kingdom

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A Model for Devotionals: S.O.A.P

S: SCRIPTURE: Draw your devotional from God's Word. Choose a short passage of Scripture and read it aloud to your campers. It can be a passage that is meaningful to you, something you have studied before, or even part of your daily reading. Build your devotional around the Bible.

O: OBSERVATION: Observe what the text says. Before jumping to what it means for you, focus on what the passage is saying. Walk your campers through it and ask them what they notice.

A: APPLICATION: Apply the passage to life. Share a story that connects to the passage and ask campers how they can respond to it. A helpful question is, "In light of this passage, how then should we live?"

P: PRAYER: Pray that the truths of the passage would be lived out in your lives. Ask campers if they have any prayer requests and give them the opportunity to pray aloud as well.



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Tips for Effective Cabin Time Discussions

1. SET CLEAR OBJECTIVES

Before starting the discussion, clarify the goal. Whether it's reflecting on Chapel, solving a problem, sharing experiences, or debriefing an activity, having a clear purpose helps keep the discussion focused.

Example: "We are going to spend the next 30 minutes reflecting on the Chapel message."

2. CREATE A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Ensure all campers feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions. Establish group rules such as respecting one another, not interrupting, and listening carefully.

Example: "Remember, this is a time for sharing. There are no bad thoughts or answers, and we want everyone to feel comfortable participating."

3. USE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Ask questions that encourage discussion and deeper thinking rather than simple yes-or-no answers. Examples include, "What do you think about...?" or "How did that experience make you feel?"

Example: "The speaker mentioned that Paul asked the Ephesians to pray at all times for all the saints. Why do you think it is important to pray often for other believers?"

4. ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

Make sure everyone has a chance to speak. You can go around the circle, use a talking object, or invite quieter campers to share their thoughts.

Example: "Let's go around the circle and share our favorite thing we got to do today!"

5. BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER

Show that you are listening by nodding, making eye contact, and responding appropriately. Summarize or paraphrase what participants say to show understanding and keep the discussion on track.

Example: "It sounds like this message really spoke to you because you have experienced a similar loss as the speaker. Is that correct?"

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Tips for Effective Cabin Time Discussions

6. FACILITATE, DON'T DOMINATE

Guide the discussion without taking over. Your role is to keep the conversation flowing and on topic, not to provide all the answers.

Example: "That's a good question, Sawyer. I have an answer, but I'm wondering what the rest of you think as well."

7. HANDLE CONFLICTS RESPECTFULLY

If disagreements arise, address them calmly and constructively. Encourage participants to express their views respectfully and remind them of the ground rules if necessary.

Example: "Let's keep our voices calm. While you may disagree on this topic, we cannot let differing views get between us."

8. INCORPORATE DIFFERENT FORMATS

Use a variety of discussion formats to keep things interesting, such as small-group discussions, partner conversations, or whole-group sharing. This can help accommodate different comfort levels and speaking styles.

Example: "I want you to discuss this question with your neighbor for two minutes, and then we'll come back together and share with the group."

9. STAY FLEXIBLE

Be prepared to adapt if the discussion takes an unexpected turn. Sometimes the best insights come from unplanned directions, so be open to following where the conversation naturally leads.

Example: "It seems like many of us don't fully understand the concept of sin. Let's open our Bibles together and see what God has to say about it."

10. SUMMARIZE AND CONCLUDE

At the end of the discussion, summarize the main points and any conclusions or action items. This helps reinforce what was discussed and ensures everyone leaves with a clear understanding of the outcomes.

Example: "Well done, everyone! It sounds like many of us are beginning to understand the weight of our sin. But remember what the speaker said about Christ's overwhelming love for us and His willingness to carry that weight Himself. Let's pray together and then move to our next activity."

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Icebreakers/Time Killers

3RD-6TH GRADE

ADJECTIVE ANNIE: Gather all your campers in a circle. Each person says an adjective that begins with the first letter of their first name, followed by their name, while performing an action that matches their adjective. For example, Kicking Kate might perform a karate kick, and Adventurous Arnold might hike in place. After each person shares, the entire group repeats their adjective, name, and action, along with everyone who went before them. By the end of the game, everyone should know each other's names and have a helpful memory tool to remember them.

HUMAN KNOT: Have the kids stand in a circle and hold hands with two different people across from them. The goal is to untangle the knot without letting go of anyone's hands. This activity promotes teamwork and problem-solving.

WOULD YOU RATHER: Ask fun "Would You Rather" questions (e.g., "Would you rather have a pet dragon or be able to fly?"). This can spark interesting conversations and help kids discover common interests.

PASS THE HULA HOOP: Form a circle and have everyone hold hands. Pass a hula hoop around the circle without breaking the chain of hands. This game encourages physical activity and teamwork.

MEMORY NAME GAME: The first person says their name and a fun fact about themselves. The next person repeats the first person's name and fact, then adds their own. This continues around the circle, helping everyone remember each other's names and fun facts.

ALPHABET HUNT: Challenge kids to find items around camp that start with each letter of the alphabet. This can be done individually or in small groups and encourages exploration and creativity.

SPIDER WEB: Sit in a circle with a ball of yarn. One child holds the yarn, says their name and something about themselves, then throws the ball to another child while holding onto the end of the yarn. This continues until a web is formed, symbolizing the connections between everyone in the group.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS: Have the group sit in a circle. One person stands in the middle and says something like, "Everyone who has a pet" or "Everyone who loves pizza." Anyone who relates to the statement must find a new spot in the circle, including the person in the middle. The last person left in the middle starts the next round.

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Icebreakers/Time Killers

3RD-6TH GRADE

COUNTING GAME: The group sits in a circle and tries to count to 20 (or any chosen number), with each person saying one number at a time. If two people say a number at the same time, the group starts over. The goal is to reach the target number without overlapping.

SIMON SAYS: One person plays “Simon” and gives commands beginning with “Simon says” (e.g., “Simon says touch your nose”). If Simon does not say “Simon says” before the command, kids should not follow the command. Anyone who does is out.

20 QUESTIONS: One child thinks of an object, person, or place, and the others take turns asking yes/no questions to guess what it is. They have up to 20 questions to figure it out.

RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT: One person is the “traffic light” and stands at a distance from the group. When they call “Green light,” kids move toward them. When they call “Red light,” everyone must freeze. If anyone moves during “Red light,” they must go back to the start.

WINK ASSASSIN: One child is secretly chosen as the “murderer,” who “kills” others by winking at them. If a child is winked at, they silently count to five and then “die.” The rest of the group tries to guess who the murderer is before they all “die.”

DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE: Kids sit in a circle while one child walks around tapping each head and saying “duck.” When they say “goose,” the chosen child must chase the tapper around the circle. If the tapper sits in the goose’s spot before being tagged, the goose becomes the new tapper.

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Icebreakers/Time Killers

6TH-12TH GRADE

LINE UP: Have the kids line up in order of their birthdays (month and day) without talking. This encourages nonverbal communication and teamwork.

THE NAME GAME: Sit in a circle. The first person says their name and a favorite activity (e.g., “I’m Alex and I like swimming.”). The next person repeats the previous person’s name and activity, then adds their own (e.g., “That’s Alex, who likes swimming, and I’m Sara, who likes reading.”).

ALL MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS: Form a circle with one person in the middle who says, “All my friends and neighbors who...” (e.g., like pizza). Everyone to whom the statement applies must switch spots while the person in the middle tries to take an open spot. The last person without a spot becomes the new person in the middle.

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES: Divide the group into two circles, one inside the other. The inner circle faces out, and the outer circle faces in. Pairs from each circle discuss a fun prompt (e.g., favorite movie) for one minute before the outer circle rotates to form new pairs.

FACT OR FICTION: Kids take turns making statements about themselves. The group guesses whether each statement is true or false.

CATEGORY CIRCLE: Sit in a circle. One person starts by naming a category (e.g., fruits). Going around the circle, each person must name something in that category without repeating any previously named items. If someone cannot think of a new item, they are out until the next round.

HUMAN KNOT: Have the kids stand in a circle and hold hands with two different people across from them. The goal is to untangle the knot without letting go of anyone’s hands. This activity promotes teamwork and problem-solving.

ZIP, ZAP, ZOP: Players stand in a circle. One player starts by clapping their hands toward another player and saying “Zip.” The next player claps toward someone else and says “Zap,” and the third player claps and says “Zop.” The pattern continues quickly. Any mistakes result in that player being out.

MAFIA: Players sit in a circle, and roles are secretly assigned (Mafia, Detective, and Villagers). The Mafia “eliminates” players at night, and the Villagers try to identify the Mafia during the day. The game involves strategy, deduction, and bluffing.

PASS THE CLAP: Players stand in a circle. One person starts by clapping and making eye contact with another player, who then does the same with someone else. The goal is to keep the clap moving around the circle without breaking the rhythm.

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Camp Song Lyrics

ROLLING OVER THE BILLOWS

Verse (repeat twice):

Rolling over the billows, Rolling over the sea, Rolling over the billows
In the deep blue sea.

Chorus:

It's cheese, it's cheese, it's cheese that makes the mice go 'round.
It's cheese, it's cheese, it's cheese that makes the mice go 'round.
It's cheese, it's cheese, it's cheese that makes the mice go 'round.
IT'S CHEESE THAT MAKES THE MICE GO 'ROUND!

Substitutions:

Cheese, Mice
Mice, Cats
Cats, Dogs
Dogs, Boys
Boys, Girls
Girls, Love
Love, World

REESE'S PEANUT BUTTER CUP

This is a repeat-after-me song.

Reese's Peanut Butter Cup,
We sing this song to pump you up!
Boom Boom Choo Choo Train
C'mon, (Name), do your thing!

Name: I can't.

Cabin: Why not?

Name: I just can't.

Cabin: Why not?

Name: My back hurts, my belt's too tight, and my booty only shakes from the left to the right.

Cabin: Left to the right?

Name: (Performs a dance or motion using "left" and "right.")

Repeat from the beginning with a new camper.

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Camp Song Lyrics



BOOM CHICKA BOOM

This is a repeat-after-me song.

I said a boom chicka boom,
I said a boom chicka boom,
I said a boom chicka rocka chicka rocka chicka boom.

Uh huh!
Oh yeah!
One more time!

Janitor Style

I said a broom sweep-a broom,
I said a broom sweep-a broom,
I said a broom sweep-a mop-a sweep-a mop-a sweep-a broom.

Valley Girl Style

I said, like, boom chicka boom,
I said a totally boom chicka boom,
I said, like, boom chicka, like, rocka chicka, like, gag me with a spoon.

Barnyard Style

I said a moo chicka moo,
I said a moo chicka moo,
I said a moo chicka, watch your step, don't track it in the room.

Race Car Style

I said a vroom shifta vroom,
I said a vroom shifta vroom,
I said a vroom shifta grind-a shifta grind-a shifta vroom.

Thunderstorm Style

I said a boom crasha boom,
I said a boom crasha boom,
I said a boom crasha flasha crasha flasha crasha boom.



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Camp Song Lyrics

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

The fruit of the Spirit's not a coconut (lemon, cherry, banana, watermelon, grape).
The fruit of the Spirit's not a coconut.

If you want to be coconut, you might as well hear it:
You can't be a fruit of the Spirit,

'Cause the fruit of the Spirit is...

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
(Use hand motions.)

TARZAN

This is a repeat-after-me song.

TARZAN!

Swingin' from a rubber band,
Smashed into a frying pan,
Now Tarzan has a tan.

JANE!

Flyin' in an airplane,
Smashed into a highway lane,
Now Jane has a pain,
Now Tarzan has a tan.

CHEETAH!

Walkin' down the street-ah,
Dancin' to the beat-ah,
Now Cheetah is Velveeta,
Now Jane has a pain,
Now Tarzan has a tan.

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Camp Song Lyrics

CHRISTIAN

I am a C,
I am a CH,
I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N.

And I have C-H-R-I-S-T in my H-E-A-R-T,
And I will L-I-V-E E-T-E-R-N-A-L-L-Y.

WAVES OF MERCY

Waves of mercy,
Waves of grace,
Everywhere I look, I see Your face.

Your love has captured me,
Oh, my God is good.
How can it be?

Na na na na na na na,
Na na na na na na na,
Na na na na na na na.

HERMAN THE WORM

I was sittin' on my fence post, chewing my bubble gum
(Chew, chew, chew, chew)

Playin' with my yo-yo,
Wee-oo! Wee-oo!

When along came Herman the Worm,
And he was this big. (Use hand motions to show the size.)

And I said, "Herman, what happened?"

"I swallowed a _____." (Insert any animal.)

Repeat the song, each time making Herman bigger and naming a larger animal.

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Listening Intelligently to Campers' Problems

This is a very limited list of issues you might encounter among campers this summer. Remember, it is not your role to solve campers' problems or offer them professional counsel. However, the following notes may help you listen to campers with care and understanding and know when to seek further help for them.

RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

The most common problems campers will bring to you will be their relationships: friends whom they can't get along with, battles with Mom and Dad, or the desire to do right but pressure from friends to do wrong.

Remember to listen, encourage them to talk, and then listen more. These issues will often resolve themselves as campers talk.

You also have a huge resource in God's Word for dealing with relationships. This is what Christ's Kingdom is all about. Healing in relationships comes through forgiveness, and we can forgive because we have been forgiven by a loving God.

You may discover that a camper is involved in some unhealthy relationships. They may have a parent who is overprotective or negligent, or who has become dependent on his or her child because of an addiction, mental disorder, or inability to cope with stress. A youth may be involved in a sexual relationship with another youth or even an adult.

In some of these situations, the camper will need more assistance than you can offer, and you will need to talk with the Cabin Leader Supervisor about getting them further help.

SELF-ESTEEM AND INSECURITY PROBLEMS

Emotional problems arising from a camper's view of themselves may be expressed in a variety of ways, from extreme shyness to dishonesty to overly aggressive behavior. The unfamiliar experience of camp can produce these emotions in a child who doesn't usually experience them in the shelter of home.

You will not change a camper's personality in one week at camp. However, you can offer them understanding, and you can give the camper a better picture of themselves to go home with.

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Listening Intelligently to Campers' Problems

GRIEF AND LOSS ISSUES (INCLUDING HOMESICKNESS)

Some campers have recently experienced the death of a friend or family member, or some other loss, such as a pet that died or a move to a new city. Even two or three years after such an occurrence, they may still be carrying difficult emotions and suffering from confusion.

Camp is a place where their pent-up emotions are sometimes finally released, resulting in crying, depression, or anger. If campers do not have a satisfactory means of expressing these emotions, such as talking with their cabin leader, their feelings will probably come out in their behavior instead.

1. EXPECT THAT A WIDE RANGE OF FEELINGS COULD BE EXPRESSED.

These may include fear, rage, guilt, helplessness, or isolation. Do not offer answers or explanations, which are not what they are looking for. Just listen, and spend time grieving, questioning, and wondering with them.

Do not be afraid to ask questions: “How did it happen? How did you hear about it? What was the funeral like?”

Avoid sympathy, pity, or other responses that will highlight their loss and make them feel worse. Use appropriate physical touch—a hug or an invitation to sit with you—to let them know you are there for them.

Try to get them involved in activities, but realize that they may have difficulty with basic decision-making and participation. If necessary, help them make some short-term goals, such as jumping off the zipline.

2. HOMESICKNESS IS ALSO GRIEF

How does homesickness fit here? The feelings associated with being separated from family and everything familiar are similar to the grief we associate with death, on a lesser scale (though in some cases, not much less!).

The signs to watch for are tears, lack of enthusiasm, isolation, and stress indicators such as stomach aches, as any grieving child might experience.

Treat homesickness as grief. Spend time listening, ask questions, let them know their feelings are normal, and help them with short-term goals (for example, waiting until Wednesday to phone home).

Involve them in activities they enjoy the most, and involve them with other staff, such as a Program Volunteer or the Camp Speaker. If they do need to go home, don't give them the impression that they have failed or that you are disappointed; talk about “next summer.”

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SIN OR HABITUAL PROBLEMS

Sometimes a camper will voluntarily come to talk about and deal with sin or bad habits in their life. This will include more common offenses such as dishonesty, swearing, or impure thoughts. However, you may also meet youth who are involved with more conspicuous habits such as sexual sin or substance abuse.

If you feel that a camper is in serious trouble, talk to the Cabin Leader Supervisor about it.

Sin is sin; take it seriously anytime a camper wants to talk about these problems, even if you think they are not significant. Gently help them understand God's viewpoint on their actions or thoughts, not in a condemning way, but so they can confess their sin to God (remembering that confession is simply telling on ourselves to God and agreeing with Him on His view of our sin).

Confession must always include repentance, or turning away from sin in our actions and attitudes. You can help a camper think through what it will mean for them to turn from their sin and come up with a plan of action to gain victory over a nagging habit.

Of course, some sins are more enslaving and will require more serious measures. If a camper is dealing with serious substance abuse or deviant sexual behavior, it is time to suggest meeting with the Program Director and the Camp Speaker.



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PROBLEMS FOR WHICH YOU WILL NEED SPECIAL AND IMMEDIATE HELP

In the following situations, do not attempt to counsel individual campers. Stay with them if necessary, but get help as soon as possible:

1. THREAT OF SUICIDE

Never leave someone who is threatening to commit suicide. Even if you suspect they may be doing it for attention, take it seriously. Stay with them or take them with you, but get help immediately. Also watch for signs that suicide is being contemplated: conversations about death; giving away possessions; severe changes in emotions or behavior; risk-taking; or suicide notes. Don't ever take chances. Get help if you suspect a camper is a threat to themselves.

2. MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL ILLNESS

If it seems to you that a camper is responding abnormally (for example, has extreme shifts in mood or personality, talks about hearing voices, or exhibits inexplicable behavior), talk with the Cabin Leader Supervisor.

There is a possibility that a mental disorder is involved that was not included on the camper's medical form, such as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), manic depression, or schizophrenia (less common). You may also encounter eating disorders—usually among teens—such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia. If a camper's eating habits are extremely irregular, or if a camper excuses themselves to the bathroom during every meal, talk with the Cabin Leader Supervisor about your observations. Even if you have some experience with any of these disorders, you should not try to deal with them entirely on your own. Get help for your campers.

3. SEVERE DEPRESSION

Depression is relatively common among adolescents who are trying to make sense of their world and are becoming discouraged. Often they just need someone to talk with in order to relieve their feelings and get them involved with the program again. However, more severe depression can affect all their usual habits—eating, sleeping, regularity, and physical activity—and then they will need more help than you can offer. If your efforts to listen and understand are having no effect, talk with the Cabin Leader Supervisor.

4. PROBLEMS THAT HIT CLOSE TO HOME

Sometimes a camper will want to talk with you about a problem with which you are also struggling and have not yet found victory. The Bible cautions that “if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” If a camper comes with a problem (for example, pornography) and you are struggling with it yourself, talk to your Cabin Leader Supervisor and have them deal with the camper. You should also talk with someone about your own problem so that you can be a clean and sanctified instrument for God's use.

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FAMILY BREAK-UP

As many as one quarter of the children in our country are from single-parent homes. These are often hurting and angry kids. What can you do for them?

1. BE AWARE OF THEIR HOME SITUATIONS

Find out early in the week the home situation of each camper. On the first night of camp, do a survey of your cabin. Along with asking fun questions like what they would do with one million dollars, ask campers the simple, nonthreatening question, "Who lives at your house?" Knowing their home situations will help you understand their emotions and responses right from the beginning.

2. EXPECT STRONG EMOTIONS

Campers from broken homes, especially if it was a recent occurrence, are struggling with strong emotions children shouldn't have to face, such as anger and hatred, shame and embarrassment, rejection, depression, guilt (blaming themselves for the break-up), hostility, aggression, and confusion. Maybe you have never experienced strong emotions such as these yourself, so how can you help these kids? What they need from you more than anything is your care and attention. Lend them your ears.

3. EXPECT UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR

Campers from this home setting are looking for attention from someone who will take time to listen to their feelings. If we fail to meet this cry for attention, their emotions will likely come out in unusual and distracting behavior.

Remember to give them all of your attention part of the time. When it comes time to discipline their behavior, be firm but have compassion for the huge emotions that are causing it.

4. BE A FRIEND, NOT A THERAPIST

Get the child involved in the program, and watch for the slow times when their thoughts go back to the problems at home. Encourage them to avoid spending lots of time alone.

A caring ear is the best gift you can offer.

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ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child and youth abuse is a frequent topic in the news, perhaps because more abuse is taking place, but certainly because those who are abused are reporting it to a greater extent than ever before.

A Cabin Leader needs to be ready to respond to the child who gives any indication that they have experienced abuse and know what steps to follow from there.

In a home where abuse or other serious problems are taking place, children live from crisis to crisis by “martial law,” as if their family is at war. The unwritten rules of their house are:

Don't Talk.
Don't Trust.
Don't Feel.

These are the three things they need to do if they are going to find relief and help while they are away from home at camp.

The best gift you can offer them is a listening ear, genuine care, and the opportunity to release their suppressed emotions.

1. WHAT YOU SHOULD DO WHEN SOMEONE INDICATES THEY HAVE BEEN ABUSED

Children and youth who have been abused have usually been warned or threatened about telling anyone. They may tell directly if they have gained enough trust in you, but you should also be aware of indicators that may show that abuse has taken place.

Usually it is a combination of these signs that will indicate abuse, rather than a single bruise or comment. Other resources will offer more extensive lists, but some common combinations to watch for are:

- Sexual Abuse – Unusual sexual knowledge or behavior; unusual modesty or immodesty; complaints about private parts; withdrawal or promiscuity.
- Physical Abuse – Wariness; unexplained injuries or bruises (especially under clothing); extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn behavior; avoidance of physical contact; fear of discipline.
- Emotional Abuse – Poor self-image; extremes in behavior and habits; bed-wetting; exhaustion; excessive crying or whining.
- Neglect – Lack of personal discipline; stealing; endangering self; extremely clingy behavior; extreme independence; stories about being left alone.

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If you suspect abuse, or if campers tell you they have been abused, encourage them to talk about what happened, but be careful not to interrogate them. It is not your responsibility to find out exactly what has taken place. Be careful not to ask leading questions that may cause them to invent incidents or exaggerate. Even if their stories are hard to imagine, believe them and let them know that you believe them.

You will need to bring other people into this situation, but tell the child that you will inform only those people who need to know and no one else. Show compassion, but keep control of your emotions so the child will be encouraged to keep talking, which is what will help and comfort them the most. Let them know that you have heard them and that you understand and care. Pray for guidance and wisdom.

When a child has talked with you about abuse they have experienced, it will be traumatic for you, and you will be responsible to take some action. Give yourself time alone to think it through. You will probably find that your time with the child was about 95% emotion and only 5% information. A social worker will ask some very basic facts besides the event itself—do you know the answers? Pray for wisdom, courage, strength, and patience.

2. WHAT YOU MUST DO WHEN SOMEONE INDICATES THEY HAVE BEEN ABUSED

Wisconsin law (48.981(2)) requires that any mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child seen by the person in the course of professional duties has been abused or neglected, or who has reason to believe that a child seen by the person in the course of professional duties has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect of the child will occur, make a report to county CPS or law enforcement.

In addition, Wisconsin law (175.32) requires that any mandated reporter who believes in good faith, based on a threat made by an individual seen in the course of professional duties regarding violence in or targeted at a school, that there is a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a student, school employee, or the public, make a report to law enforcement.

If it is found that a person has been negligent and has failed to report abuse, they are considered to have indirectly assisted in the abuse and may face fines or even imprisonment.

When a child indicates that they have been abused, you may be unsure if the matter is serious enough, or you may not want to cause trouble for the family. It is true that when you report abuse, things are set in motion that may be traumatic for the family. But you must report it, even if you only have reasonable suspicions and not hard facts.

It is for the child's good, as it may stop the abuse and protect them from further harm in the future.

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You may be afraid that the child will be removed from the home and that the parents will blame you. In most cases these days, it is the offender, not the child, who is removed. In any case, it is better to have this kind of disruption in the home than for a child to suffer throughout their childhood.

By doing this, you tip the balance of power that the offender has over the victim.

Start by telling the child that you will be telling someone about what they have told you. Assure them that it is for the sake of their own safety and that no one will know except those who have to know.

From there, talk with someone who has more experience than you, either a Program Volunteer or the Program Director. They will know what to do from that point and will be able to offer you the emotional support you need.

Most child protection services move only to protect a child. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing and that now healing can begin.

Give them time to talk with you further during the rest of the week. Assure them that they are not to blame for what has happened, and talk with them about their anxiety for their family in the future.



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It would be impossible to cover every problem you might come across as a Cabin Leader. Many times, you will simply need to ask God for wisdom and common sense to decide how to approach and handle a specific situation.

Remember that there are others at camp who likely have more experience than you. If in doubt, ask your Cabin Leader Supervisor or Director for advice and further resources.

Here are a few pointers from those who have been there:

DISHONESTY

1. LYING

Why do people tell lies? Lying is an attempt to regain control in a situation where we are losing it. For example, a camper is afraid they will not be accepted by their fellow campers, so to gain acceptance they invent or exaggerate a story about some amazing thing they did.

Often other campers won't believe them, and they feel their control of the situation slipping again, so they lie some more. With younger campers, it is sometimes a case of speaking without knowing, until even the speaker believes it to be true.

Lying is not a personality trait and can be disciplined. Lying is a response to insecurity, so the camper needs to find better ways to deal with situations in which they feel insecure. If other campers start labeling them as a liar (which they probably will—a good occasion to mention Jesus' words about throwing stones), it would be appropriate to take the time to talk to them, explore the problem together, and come up with some solutions.

For example, if a camper has been telling tall tales, you could discuss whether these were things that actually happened or only things they wished would happen. Perhaps you could help them channel their imagination into the real world; for example, you could encourage them to tell fictional stories for fun rather than for acceptance. Some campers have learned to use lies to deceive and manipulate others. This is a little more rare, but when it happens, you will need to take a firm hand to maintain control of the situation.

Let the camper know that you understand what they are doing, and don't permit them to use their fellow campers' naivete to get their own way. If manipulation is a way of life for a camper, you will not change their habit in one week. However, you can help them see their need for integrity and reliability, and their need for a Savior.

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2. CHEATING

Younger campers may cheat in games because of a basic self-centeredness. They get very upset if anyone else cheats, but prefer holding the edge they themselves gain from cheating. Older campers will cheat out of laziness, lack of interest in a game, or simply out of rebellion. Beyond the fact that cheating spoils the game for campers, you want the one who is cheating to learn the value of honesty.

The primary way of doing this is to be an example of honesty yourself. Avoid all appearance of cheating (which can be tough if other Cabin Leaders are cheating or if the game seems unfair). During the game, hang out with campers who have a tendency to cheat. It is not hard to convince younger campers that it is cool to be able to say, “I don’t need to cheat to win.” Your own example of integrity is still the best influence, and every game presents many teachable moments that relate to everyday life. Using a game as a learning opportunity will be more effective than penalizing them or making them sit out the game, which just teaches them not to get caught next time.

3. STEALING

A case of theft in the cabin can be very upsetting to campers. Beyond the feelings of loss to the one who has been robbed, theft makes everyone feel vulnerable and at risk. Emotions can escalate, and accusations will soon follow. Even a fight among campers will do less to bring chaos and disunity to a cabin, and so theft needs to be dealt with quickly.

The best thing to do, of course, is to prevent theft in the first place. As campers arrive, observe or ask about valuables they have brought with them. You should not agree to hold valuable items for safekeeping (which would then make you liable for them if something happened), but the camp office will be willing to put them in a secure place. Camp will keep campers’ money in an account for them, so encourage them to deposit cash into their camper account. This can be cashed out at the end of the week. Avoid keeping your valuable property in the cabin—you are not immune to theft.

If an item goes missing, don’t let your campers assume it was stolen. Have everyone check their stuff to “see if it got into the wrong bag.” This might give the one who stole the item an easy way out of their predicament, but it solves the problem. If an item can’t be found, and especially if more things disappear, it is time for a cabin conference. Tell the group that if someone has taken the item, they must come and see you, that you will straighten it out, and that it won’t mean doom for them when they do. If someone comes to you to admit a theft, deal with the matter as sin that needs forgiveness and restitution. You will need to judge whether it is necessary for them to go and admit their theft to the person who was robbed or to the cabin group. All unresolved thefts should be reported to your Cabin Leader Supervisor. If you discover a camper who steals compulsively or on a broad scale at home, you will need to take time to talk with them about it and perhaps seek additional help for them.

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AGGRESSIVENESS

1. DISPUTES AND FIGHTING

The basic first action when there is a dispute, and especially when there is a fight, is this: Don't let it continue. Stop the conflict as soon as you can safely do so. When a dispute involves arguing or behind-the-scenes nastiness, step in, let those involved know you are aware of what is going on, and begin to resolve it as soon as possible. A week is a short period of time, and conflict between campers can rob them of much of it. At Boys and Girls Camp, you can expect a dispute or fight to be between just two campers; at Jr. High, it is more likely that several people are involved. Unfortunately, it is no longer considered cowardly for a group to gang up on one person and beat them up.

If there is a fight and you feel you can step in without endangering yourself or getting more campers involved, do so immediately. Don't stand and watch to see what will happen (this is not the National Hockey League). If you are not sure you can stop the fight, or if any weapons are involved, immediately get or send for help. Cold water is used to separate fighting dogs, and it works well on people too. The main thing is to reduce the possibility of injury. If the campers are angry enough, they may try to go after one another even after you separate them. Therefore, it is best for staff to get them far apart as quickly as possible and begin dealing with the issues involved.

When those involved in a fight or dispute have been taken aside by staff and have calmed down enough, one staff member (often the Cabin Leader Supervisor) should talk with each of them separately, getting all sides of the story. Make forgiveness and reconciliation your goal. When there is evidence that the individuals at fault are ready to apologize, bring them together. If another outbreak seems likely, warn instigators that it will be dealt with strongly and immediately. They should come under close supervision and be kept busy. It is not unusual for someone who has taken a beating to want to call home. You should allow them to do so, but be sure a staff member talks with the parents first.

2. THE PICKED-ON CAMPER

If a camper is being picked on by other campers and a warning doesn't immediately stop it, tell the Cabin Leader Supervisor right away. Don't wait for a camper's whole week to be spoiled by aggressive, angry, and insecure people. Avoid leaving the picked-on camper alone without supervision; if necessary, let them hang out with you.

Remember that those who are doing the bullying also need help and discipline. Why are they acting aggressively? Is the one being picked on at fault (e.g., teasing others or being obnoxious)? Who is the instigator among them? Let them know that you will not permit their behavior to continue, but don't allow them to get you uptight—which may be their whole purpose. Try to get at the reasons for their aggressiveness and then deal with them. Work toward an agreement to finish the week with no more aggressive incidents.

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3. CABIN TAKE-OVER

Occasionally, you will get a camper who is aggressive enough to challenge your leadership of the cabin group. They will talk loudly, try to get you uptight, and draw the other campers to side against you.

A Cabin Leader's natural reaction will be authoritarian: to take control. You will be more effective if you balance control with love and support. Try to get behind the aggressiveness of the camper and see why it is there. Don't ignore or override the camper, but befriend them. However, be careful not to reward their acting out. Often their aggressiveness is a learned way of gaining attention and acceptance, so show them that you are ready to offer these unconditionally.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY

1. PRACTICAL JOKES

Practical jokes can seem fun, but it is not hard for them to become thoughtless and destructive. Let your cabin know at the beginning of the week that practical jokes will not be tolerated. When someone has played a tasteless practical joke, forget the joke part of it (especially if the joke was on you) and deal with the damage done to things or people's feelings. Let your campers have fun, but not at the material, emotional, or physical expense of others.

2. RAIDS

A raid is an invasion of another cabin and is not permitted at camp. If you overhear campers talking about "raids," let them know you are aware of their conversation and warn them of the serious consequences of their plans. Many younger cabins seem to almost want to be raided and may report a raid to you the first time someone rumples their sleeping bags. Sometimes they even mess up their own cabin so they can say they have been "raided." If your cabin is messed up by another group, talk with the Cabin Leader Supervisor about it and do your best to calm the anger, accusations, and threats of retaliation.

3. DAMAGED PROPERTY

Campers who purposely or carelessly destroy another camper's property (or the camp's property) should be held liable if there is no doubt about what they have done. If possible, this should be taken care of at camp (for example, a camper replacing a ruined flashlight with one bought from the camp store). If not, the camper's parents should be contacted. Unless it is very minor, it is not good discipline to let purposeful damage go unpunished by simply saying it is too bad and that the camper shouldn't have done it. Teach them the costly consequences of failing to respect another person's property.

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PROBLEMS OF THE TONGUE

1. SWEARING

There are three basic forms of swearing: obscenity (using socially unacceptable words that describe body parts and functions), profanity (using God's name or God's things improperly), and cursing (verbally abusing or controlling another person). This language goes against the standards of LGYC, and as guests in our place, campers must uphold the house rules. Don't ignore swearing, but stay on top of it throughout the week if necessary. Talk with campers about their offensive language and why it is a problem (many kids do not even know it is a problem), and offer help in overcoming it. Bad language should be considered verbal abuse and dealt with seriously.

2. INAPPROPRIATE STORIES

When campers are hanging out together, it is natural for them to pass on their personal repertoire of jokes and stories to one another; unfortunately, there seem to be more bad ones than good ones out there these days. It is appropriate to set higher standards for jokes and stories than campers are used to; it is only right that they live by the house rules. When a joke is starting to go past the boundaries of decency, don't hesitate to step in and stop it. If the person persists, talk with him personally and decide on consequences. There will be some fairly sheltered kids in your cabin who don't need to go home with seared consciences. Talk about why the stories are inappropriate (see Ephesians 5:3-14). Provide them with some good and hilarious examples of clean jokes from your own extensive collection!

3. PUT-DOWNS

In spite of attempts to promote "tolerance," it is still human nature to elevate ourselves by putting others down. There may be a place for put-downs in a joking manner, but even a joke can unintentionally do damage. "Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows is a man who deceives his neighbor and says, 'I was only joking!'" (Proverbs 26:18-19). Make it a standard in your cabin group to be constructive in your language with one another. "Don't let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs" (Ephesians 4:29). Constructive language could possibly include the competitive kind of fun that stands for "intimacy" among guys as they tease one another. What you should avoid in your group is the negative and destructive language that the world uses every day out of insecurity and pride. Help those who have developed this habit see why it is inappropriate and develop more positive language.

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ATTITUDE PROBLEMS

1. UNCOOPERATIVE CAMPERS

The reasons for an uncooperative spirit in a camper may range from shyness to rebellion, but it will always put a drain on your time and energy and cause problems for your cabin group.

As soon as you detect this attitude, take time with the person and explore the reasons for their uncooperativeness. You may discover they are angry about being dropped off at camp or getting stuck in a cabin where they have no friends. It is better to deal with an attitude as a counseling problem first than to have it become a discipline issue all week.

Some campers seem to never be where they are supposed to be because of their attitudes or lack of self-discipline. Make regular head counts of your campers at meals and other events where they are to be together. Anticipate the uncooperative camper's habits so you can remind and motivate them to go where they are expected. Check occasionally to make sure they have been at their activities when you were not scheduled to be with them.

2. PREJUDICE

Thankfully, many children and youth pay little attention anymore to differences in race, culture, and ability. But prejudice (or "pre-judging") will always be with us and is likely to show up at camp. This attitude is defeated when people take the time and effort to get to know one another and discover what they have in common.

Don't tolerate labeling, name-calling, or the exclusion of the "different" camper. Instead of lecturing the prejudiced camper, help them see that they are judging before they have given someone a chance, and encourage them to get involved with those they are judging.

3. BIG MOUTH

Some kids are just loud and obnoxious. This may be part of their personality, which shouldn't be disciplined. However, you can help the obnoxious child learn to be more aware of the people around them and to think before they act or speak. Be firm, but be ever loving and accepting. Don't let them get away with doing damage to other campers' dignity or self-esteem, and encourage them to take up their responsibility to put the needs of others ahead of their own.

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4. NO RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

When you feel threatened by a camper's lack of respect for you, your natural reaction might be to demand respect. The place to begin with a disrespectful child is with your own attitude: Do you really need to defend yourself or your authority with this person? Get it in perspective. This child is hurting, angry, or untrained. Perhaps they are only testing you, and you have an opportunity to become one of the few people they have learned to respect.

Don't allow campers to back-talk you or speak to you disrespectfully. Tell them you will only listen if they talk in a normal tone and manner. Some campers have learned to use a disrespectful tone or pretend ignorance to manipulate adults into becoming flustered; don't play their game. Let them know who is boss, but also let them know you love them and have chosen to spend a whole week with them. Whether or not you finally win their respect, be ever deserving of it.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1. SMOKING

Researchers agree that nicotine is a drug equally as addictive as hard drugs such as cocaine. Most smokers begin their addiction as children or young youth and, within a year, are almost incapable of quitting. Camp's policy is that cigarettes are contraband, and finding them on a camper's person or in their belongings could be grounds for being sent home. You are expected to follow this policy and not simply ignore it. You can help the child or youth who is addicted to nicotine. Encourage them to make this the week that they begin to overcome the habit that controls them. They can go for a week without the drug, but you should expect that this will affect their moods and emotions.

2. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Alcohol and illicit drugs are not part of any children's or youth camp. At our camp, this applies to staff as well. Any use or sale of drugs or alcohol by campers or staff must be reported to the Program Team, who will likely advise the Cabin Leader on how to proceed with discipline.

When a child or youth shows signs of suffering from an addiction—mood swings, physical discomfort, sweating, anxiety—or wants to talk about their addiction, gently help them think through the extent of their problem. An addicted person usually denies having a problem and can be manipulative. You could discuss questions such as this: "Do you ever find yourself using more of your drug than you or your friends think you should?" This question alone would identify a drug addiction about 90% of the time. It is likely that after an initial discussion about their problem, you will need to refer the camper to other help, starting with the Cabin Leader Supervisor. You can continue to be a firm support to them. Be sure to keep their problem as confidential as possible.

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GUY/GIRL PROBLEMS

1. CAMPER TO CAMPER

We have a standard of conduct between the sexes, and you will be expected to enforce—and exemplify—its policies. If you observe inappropriate behavior between a guy and a girl, don't ignore it. Talk with their cabin leaders, and if one of your campers is involved, talk privately with them yourself. LGYC's standard may be a new idea to some campers, and this will give you a good opportunity to discuss with them God's view and purpose for sexual behavior.

If you know that one of your campers has developed a relationship with another camper, you will need to be more aware of where they are at all times and will need to keep them involved in the program and not just with one another. Show them respect, but make sure they also respect one another and those around them.

2. INFATUATION WITH STAFF

It happens every summer: staff get little notes passed to them from some secret admirer. It may seem cute, but remember that to the camper it is no joke. They feel something for the staff member that has been interpreted as true love. Emotions are involved here, and they can be damaged or encouraged easily.

If you receive such attention and you know the source, go to the camper, thank them, and say that you are glad to be a friend (yes, you can gently and tactfully put stress on the last word).

Watch yourself. It feels good to have that kind of attention from someone who may be only several years younger than you. Never take advantage of such attention. Allow no physical contact or time alone with this camper. Some children or youth who have been abused or sexually active at an early age become seductive and promiscuous, particularly with people older than themselves. If the problem persists, talk with that camper's cabin leaders, who should gently help their camper return to reality and deal with their emotions.

CONTROL PROBLEMS

1. DISRUPTIONS AT FIRESIDES, CHAPEL, AND OTHER MEETINGS

At the beginning of every fireside, chapel session, or other meeting, locate all your campers. Younger campers will usually sit with you, but older ones could be anywhere. Make sure that they are all there, and do what is necessary to locate yourself strategically among campers, especially those who might cause a disturbance. If they haven't left space for you, move yourself in among them in a friendly way. It is better to move campers around to prevent a disturbance before everything starts than to move them because of a disturbance later.

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If there is a disruption (e.g., campers talking during the speaker's time, or bothering people around them, etc.), the best method of dealing with it is to trade places with one of the troublemakers. Don't remove someone from the meeting except as a last resort. Generally, this makes a bigger disturbance than the one caused by the camper.

Campers who are not participating (e.g., not singing or not standing with everyone) are not necessarily being disruptive and should not be forced to participate. Instead, encourage them by your own example and enthusiasm.

2. PROBLEMS AT MEALS

Mealtimes are very important at camp because they are one of the few meeting points in the busy daily schedule. Make them fun times, but don't allow campers to spoil the fun of those around them.

The smallest food fight will escalate into chaos in no time. A camper who spoils another conversation flows easily, but it will be up to you to keep the topics positive and constructive.

Maintain firm but friendly control at meals, and direct potentially disturbing energy into fun activities—like straight-face contests to see who is going to scrape the plates—so that, as with all discipline, the result is a better relationship with your campers.

3. CAMPERS OUT-OF-CONTROL

Pray that it will not happen, but on rare occasions (sometimes on the last night of the week), campers will go wild, imagining that if everyone gets involved, no one is going to get sent home. It can be very unnerving to cabin leaders and staff to realize that control is slipping from their grasp, and it can cause them to do some very unwise things, such as scream and yell and start grabbing kids.

You want the campers to calm down, so remain calm yourself. Work together to get the more mature campers back on-side, and from there get to the real instigators of the "riot." These are the ones who will need discipline—there is not much purpose in disciplining everyone. The Cabin Leader Supervisors will be involved from this point with the instigators, but it will be left to you to deal with the physical and emotional damages in your own cabin.

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Recreation Activities Explanations

These are the all of recreation options provided at Igyc. Many of these options will be available during the morning recreation rotations or during free time.

HANDCRAFT

Location: Handcraft Center

Cabins will be led by a camp volunteer in a craft activity. Help keep campers attentive during instruction and assist them as they complete a craft to take home.

NATURE CENTER (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Nature Center

Lead a scavenger hunt observation activity around the Nature Center, tree line, and zipline area. Help campers record observations and find all items on the list. Turn it into a race and record completion times. Supplies are at the Nature Center.

GAME ROOM (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Carrera Welcome Center

Hang out in the AC and play games at the Carrera Welcome Center.

OUTDOOR GAMES (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Basketball Court / 9 Square / Gaga Ball

Play basketball games (knockout, horse, pig), 9-Square (King Spot), and Gaga Ball. Equipment is at each site.

FLOOR HOCKEY (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Outdoor Pavilion by Northwoods

Play floor hockey with your cabin. Equipment provided.

ARCHERY

Location: Archery Range by the Humphrey House

Recreation Guides lead archery while campers rotate through shooting. Run waiting games in the field.

HIKE (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Camp / Big Foot Beach State Park

Use the "Path to the Lake" for a hike and intentional camper conversations. Optional access to Big Foot Beach State Park trails if time allows. Check for ticks and use bug spray.

FIRE BUILDING

Location: Snow Tube Hill Fire Site

Campers work together to build a fire using provided tools. Recreation Guide assists early steps, but campers are challenged to complete it independently.

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Recreation Activities Explanations



POSTCARD WRITING (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Tack Room (north side of the Chalet)

Campers write up to 2 postcards home or to friends. Help with writing if needed. Camp mails postcards. Supplies will be in the Tack Room.

WIFFLE BALL (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Billy Meisner Wiffle Ball Park

Play wiffle ball or a home run derby.

VOLLEYBALL (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Double Volleyball Outside Carrera Welcome Center

Play volleyball or Nukem. Run a friendly tournament.

CLIMBING WALL

Location: Ceylon Court Camp Gym

Recreation Guides run the indoor climbing wall. Assist with harnesses and help manage waiting campers.

OPEN GYM

Location: Ceylon Court Camp Gym

Play gym games (basketball, volleyball, kickball, soccer, etc.) in an air-conditioned space.

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Recreation Activities Explanations

CRATE STACKING

Location: Activity Field 2 by Bathhouse

Campers stack milk crates while belayed by Recreation Guides. One builds while others pass crates and cheer.

ARCHERY TAG

Location: Paintball Field

Inter-cabin archery tag game led by Recreation Guides. Focus on strategy and teamwork.

TUBING

Location: Lakefront

Waterfront staff take campers tubing on Geneva Lake. Wear swim clothes to breakfast. Some campers will wait on shore; bring games to keep them engaged.

LAGOON

Location: Ceylon Lagoon

Paddleboats or canoes in the lagoon. Canoe race option to the bridge and back.

YARD GAMES (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Activity Field 1 by Heick Center

Play cornhole, spikeball, can jam, bocce ball. Run a small tournament.

KICKBALL (SELF-LEAD)

Location: Activity Field 1 by Heick Center

Play kickball or run a kickball derby to see who can kick the farthest.



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Daily Cabin Clean Up



OUTSIDE (2 POINTS)

- Hang wet items neatly on the clothesline.
- Return dry items to their owners.
- Keep the front concrete step clear of shoes, trash, dirt, and other items.
- Pick up any trash around the cabin circle.
- Close the entrance door.

BUNK AREA (4 POINTS)

- Make all beds.
- Put away clothing, shoes, and personal belongings.
- Clear the floor of trash and dirt.
- Empty the trash and replace the liner.

BATHROOM (4 POINTS)

- Sink Area
 - Wipe water from countertops.
 - Remove hair and throw away any trash.
- Put away or neatly organize all toiletries.
- Shower Area
 - Wipe up excess water from the floor.
 - Put away or neatly organize all toiletries.
 - Hang towels up to dry; do not leave them on the floor.
- Clear the floor of trash and dirt.
- Empty the trash and replace the liner.
- Turn off all lights.

TOTAL: 10 POINTS DAILY



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Writing Your Camper's Cards



Please write each camper a card that will be sent home a few months after camp. It does not need to be long, but make it personal. These cards are a great keepsake for campers to look back on and remember their time at camp.

Before you start, think about:

What week of camp was it?
Which camper are you writing to?
What was your favorite thing about them?
What is a specific memory or moment you shared?
Sign your name!

EXAMPLE

Dear (Camper's Name),

I hope you're settling back into home life and sharing all your camp stories with your family! I've been thinking about the amazing time we had together during (Camp Week), and I wanted you to know how special you made it.

My favorite memory with you was (specific memory or moment).

Thank you for bringing such positive energy and joy to our camp. Keep shining and having fun!

I hope to see you next summer at LGYC!

(Your Name)



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

LGYC Code of Conduct

THIS IS WHAT YOUR CAMPERS WILL BE AGREEING TO AND SIGNING. USE THIS AS A RESOURCE IF NECESSARY.

Lake Geneva Youth Camp is dedicated to providing our campers with a life-changing summer camp experience. Campers are expected to behave appropriately and promote a safe, fun, and healthy environment to accomplish this goal. Our goal is to encourage character values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in our camp programs. We ask that all campers and parents/ guardians read and sign this code together before arriving at camp.

AS A CAMPER, I WILL:

RESPECT

- Be respectful, cooperative, and contribute positively to the experience of fellow campers.
- Be careful and considerate with my actions to ensure they will not hurt another camper's feelings or hurt them physically, either intentionally or accidentally.
- Show respect to my cabin leader and camp staff and cooperate fully with their instructions.
- Follow directions at all times.
- Respect the rights and beliefs of others and treat others with courtesy and consideration.
- Use language appropriate for a Christian community.
- Respect the property of others.

PERSONAL SPACE AND PROPERTY

- Be respectful of all camp property and equipment/supplies.
- Never mark, deface, or destroy camp or other people's personal property.

BEHAVIOR

- Conduct myself responsibly. I understand that horseplay, inappropriate touching, unwelcome teasing/bullying, or unkind behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Communicate appropriately, which means I will not use foul language, gestures, harsh words or intimidating speech and threats of any kind.
- Refrain from deliberately causing bodily harm to the campers or staff. I understand that pushing, kicking, hitting, or fighting are unacceptable. This behavior will not be tolerated and will be grounds for immediate dismissal from the camp program.

SAFETY

- Pay attention to my surroundings and use care in all activities.
- Adhere to all safety rules and regulations for each activity I participate in while at camp.

GENERAL

- Wear appropriate clothing to camp each day.
- Inform the camp staff if I am experiencing a problem with another camper or other issues. If I do not let my cabin leader know about a problem, they cannot assist me or stop the issue.
- Have FUN, but not at the expense of others.
- Participate in activities to the best of my ability.
- Cell phones are not permitted for campers during camp session. (Please plan to leave your cell phone at home). Any cell phones or other electronics brought to camp will be collected and returned at the end of the week. If a parent or guardian needs to contact a camper, please call the Lake Geneva Youth Camp office, and our staff will assist you in contacting your camper.

I understand that violating the Code of Conduct can be grounds for disciplinary action. Lake Geneva Youth Camp will attempt to be fair in assessing consequences for camper behavior. When appropriate, consequences shall be given in a progressive order concerning the severity and/or frequency of the infraction(s), including, but not limited to, automatic suspension/dismissal. I understand that no refunds are given if I am dismissed from the camp program.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

- Parents and Campers: We want campers to be able to experience the safest week possible; Lake Geneva Youth Camp has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for the following behaviors:
- Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal substance or paraphernalia (e.g., Vaping pen)
- Possession or use of a weapon of any kind. This includes look-alike weapons or objects that may be used to threaten, intimidate, or harm others or damage property. (Examples are knives, guns, weapons, fireworks, etc.,)
- Theft
- Physical assault
- Sexual misconduct
- Bullying
- Any camper who willfully violates any of the above rules of conduct may be dismissed immediately at the discretion of the Program Director. No refunds are given if I am dismissed from the camp program.

Please sign below to acknowledge you have reviewed our Camper Code of Conduct with your camper and agree to the terms and conditions of the Camper Code of Conduct:

CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Patch Verses

CUB: John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

WOLF: Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

SCOUT: Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. 4Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

WARRIOR: Ephesians 6:10-18

10Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. 19Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Patch Verses

EAGLE: Isaiah 40:21-31

Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? 22He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. 23He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. 24No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff. 25“To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. 26Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. 27Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God”? 28Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

BEAR: John 15:1-9

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. 9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.”



CABIN LEADER GUIDE

Patch Verses

COUNCILMAN: Proverbs 2:1-11

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— 3indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. 6For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. 9Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. 10For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. 11Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.



CHIEF: Philippians 3:12-21

2Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16Only let us live up to what we have already attained. 17Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. 18For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. 20But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.



*All verse are from the NIV