

Ohio 4-H Camp Counselor Handbook



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Section 1: Introduction

What is 4-H

4-H is delivered by Ohio State University Extension—a community that provides experiences where young people learn by doing. Youth complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and citizenship, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors. They are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Kids may experience 4-H in every county and state in the country—through in-school and after-school programs, school and community clubs and 4-H camps. For more information about Ohio 4-H and how to get involved locally, please visit <https://ohio4h.org/>.

What is Camp

Camp is a supervised program for youth or teenagers. The primary purpose of many camps is educational, athletic, or cultural development while allowing youth to learn new skills in a safe and nurturing environment. Camps are transformative experiences that are typically based on traditions and rituals or allow for the expansion of knowledge that allow campers to develop a sense of belonging while providing structure.

Camp can:

- Create fun and adventurous environments
- Provide freedom for individuals to make their own decisions
- Challenge individuals to try new things
- Provide opportunities to develop personality and character
- Create a positive learning environment
- Provide campers a sense of responsibility and success
- Provide leadership opportunities
- Create a safe environment where all are welcome
- Build healthy habits
- Provide a caring and competent staff
- Create a spirit of teamwork
- Foster new friendships
- Provide an understanding of the environment and appreciation of nature

Residential 4-H camps are different than other camps in many ways. It is important to identify how 4-H camps are different than others. Typical residential 4-H camps last multiple days and nights at a camping facility. This is different than Day Camps in which youth do not stay overnight but can participate for one or more days. 4-H camps are inclusive to all genders and do not affiliate with a specific religion or culture of people.

American Camp Association

Some of our 4-H camp facilities and programs are American Camp Association (ACA) accredited. The ACA is a community of camp professionals who have joined together to share their knowledge and experience to ensure the quality of camping programs. If a camp is ACA accredited it means that the camp keeps up with the latest camp information and the camp is held to a national standard. For more information, please visit <https://www.acacamps.org/>.

The 8 Essential Elements of 4-H

The essential elements of a 4-H experience are the “best practices” that help staff and volunteers address the four basic developmental needs of youth - belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery. These elements were derived from the work of the National 4-H Impact Design Implementation Team, who reviewed the basic and applied research on characteristics of effective programs for youth development. From this process, eight elements critical to positive youth development and central to the 4-H experience emerged (Samuel & Rose, 2018). 4-H camps embody these eight elements in different ways:

- **Belonging**
 - 1) A Positive Relationship with a Caring Adult
 - 4-H camps offer a positive relationship with older youth and adult staff, which creates a mentorship in which caring relationships are fostered.
 - 2) An Inclusive Environment
 - 4-H camps are open to all individuals, they create spaces in which a youth may feel safe to explore and grow, no matter their identity or beliefs.
 - 3) A Safe Emotional and Physical Environment
 - By providing trained counselors and staff that supervise and guide campers throughout the week, 4-H camps are committed to safety, care, and mental and physical wellness.
- **Mastery**
 - 4) Opportunity for Mastery
 - 4-H camps offer an opportunity for youth to discover their passions and encourage excellence in their areas of study and interests.
 - 5) Engagement in Learning
 - By challenging campers to engage with others, try new things, and push themselves, an environment of learning is created by offering programs that increase knowledge in skills.

- Independence
 - 6) Opportunity to See Oneself as an Active Participant in the Future
 - Camp counselors are able to evaluate and process their current work and determine how they will change activities in the future. They also are able to relate the responsibility of a counselor to the workforce and relate their work at camp to their future careers.
 - 7) Opportunity for Self-Determination
 - Campers and counselors are able to select how they contribute and are involved in camp. Counselors also have the ability to plan and prepare camp for their campers. Both campers and counselors set goals and expectations in what they wish to participate in at camp.
- Generosity
 - 8) Opportunity to Value and Practice Service to Others
 - Counselors are able to serve the other youth in their camping program by volunteering their time and energy to prepare and offer a successful camp.

Who's at Camp

When at camp we often see many different people who have various responsibilities and roles at camp. Some of these groups of people are selected and trained for their specific role. Here are some of the people you will see at camp:

Campers

Campers are the most common individuals you will see at camp. For residential camps, campers are typically ages 8 to 13 years of age. Day camp ages may vary depending on the program of focus. The campers are the reason camp is put on. Depending on the size of the camping facility there could be anywhere from 50 to over 200 campers at camp at one time. Chapter 3 goes into more detail about campers and their behavior.

Counselors

Counselors are the life force of camp. They are the ones, with adult supervision, that plan and put on camp. In Ohio 4-H, counselors are often 14 to 18 years of age. The counselors are responsible for the safety, well-being, education and fun of the campers. They guide the campers through camp activities and sessions/workshops and are involved with the planning and programming of camp as well. Best practice for Ohio 4-H is a minimum of 24 hours of training with 6 of those hours of training on site. Chapter 2 goes into more detail of what being a counselor looks like and the counselor's responsibility.

Camp Director

The camp director is often the 4-H Educator or Professional of your respective county. The camp director supervises all staff, counselors, and campers. They also oversee the planning, administrative duties, and responsibility for all camp activities and incidents. The camp director typically has the final say in all decisions made for camp.

Adult Staff

Typically, the adult staff are volunteers above the age of 18. Within 4-H the adults are typically from the same county as the campers and the counselors. It is important to note that the adult staff are often different from the permanent/program camp employed staff. Adult staff often help in assisting with activities, sessions/workshops and overseeing the counselors and campers. Adult staff must be approved 4-H volunteers to assist with camp.

Nurse/Medical Staff

The camp nurse or medical staff provides first aid care for campers, counselors, and staff, oversees the administering and storing of medication, coordinates visits to a physician, if needed, and serves as a liaison between parents. They also maintain medical paperwork and monitor general health and cleanliness standards at camp. Typically, the nurse also comes from the respective county that the counselors, campers, adult staff, and camp director are from.

Camp Facilities Manager

The camp facilities manager is the individual who works for the camp. Some facilities managers are employed by OSU, others are employed by the camp. Not all camps employ a facilities manager. The facilities manager supervises seasonal maintenance staff and supervises the permanent staff that work for the camp facility. They typically oversee and maintain the cabins, buildings, equipment and financial matters.

Permanent/ Program Camp Staff

Program or permanent staff are often hired by the camping facility. They tend to live at the camping facility and report to the camp facilities manager. They usually have specific roles and responsibilities at camp. There are various roles and responsibilities of program staff in the areas of programming, crafts, recreation and more. Some specific program staff are:

Lifeguards

Lifeguards are responsible for the pool/waterfront area. They open and close the pool/waterfront, depending on each camp's schedule and hours. Life guards monitor pool-related activities closely and identify any safety issues.

Naturalist

Naturalists help campers understand the historic, natural and scientific significance of the camp. They plan, organize and direct programs and activities that focus on the environment and nature. Often naturalists are expected to know about different plant and animal life.

Kitchen Staff

The kitchen staff are responsible for food preparation and general kitchen sanitation. Their main responsibilities are to prepare and serve campers, counselors, and camp staff. They order the food and keep a record of all supplies. They should be aware of any food allergies in order to make special accommodations.

Section 2: Counselors

Camp counselors are the life force of camp. They bring the ideas, planning, teaching, energy, and camp culture to life.

Why be a Camp Counselor?

In today's world you are often pulled in many different directions. With all the things that you can do, why be a 4-H camp counselor? Here are a few reasons why you may decide to be a 4-H camp counselor.

A Chance to Give Back

Many teens decide to be camp counselors because they were campers and had amazing counselors. Because they had such a positive experience with their camp counselors they decide to do the same and give back by being a remarkable counselor to other campers. Being a camp counselor gives teens the opportunity to serve as leaders when caring for campers and through planning and implementing camp programs.

Developing Life Skills

Camp counselors have the opportunity to learn valuable life skills that help them develop into engaged, responsible, and caring adults. Examples of life skills that counselors may learn and practice may include:

- How to engage with different people from all different backgrounds
- Being aware of physical, emotional, social, or mental needs of others.
- Communication skills, public speaking, and self-direction.

A solid foundation of life skills are developed by teens as they serve as camp counselors.

Preparing for the Workforce

Research has shown that being a 4-H camp counselor helps build valuable skills for the workforce (Ferrari & McNeely, 2007). Serving as a camp counselor can help develop leadership, teamwork, initiative, and interpersonal skills. Many companies are looking for employees who exhibit these skills. The county 4-H Camp Director trains camp counselors on these different skills as well as providing opportunities to practice them.

Counselor Expectations

There are certain things that 4-H, your Camp Director, and your 4-H Professional will expect from a camp counselor. These expectations are communicated in a variety of ways.

Counselor Position Description

One way 4-H Professionals communicate their expectations of camp counselors is by providing a position description when you are applying to be a counselor. Position descriptions are used so that counselors have a clear understanding of the responsibilities and duties that are required and expected of them.

Counselor Responsibilities on a camp counselor position description may include:

- Attend required trainings prior to camp
- Market and promote camp
- Serve in a leadership and teaching role to other counselors
- Serve on committees or other groups to plan programs at camp
- Conduct self in an appropriate manner before, during, and after camp while serving as a role model to campers and peers
- Assist staff and other counselors with camp activities; work as a team to implement the activities
- Know and understand all safety guidelines, including emergency procedures, associated with the camp and program areas
- Follow and enforce camp rules
- Assure for safety of campers at all times including in cabins, sessions, and large group activities
- Be aware of child protection regulations and report any abuse or neglect in accordance with university policy
- Identify and respond to camper behavior issues
- Ensure campers' health and hygiene, e.g., brushing teeth, eating meals, taking medication, etc.
- Promote camper participation during camp
- Lead and supervise campers in activities at camp including but not limited to songs, teambuilding challenges, group activities, challenges, etc.
- Lead campers at workshops or during other components at camp (table setting, song leading, etc.)
- Mentor and give guidance to campers to encourage positive youth development and enhancement of life skills

Roles of Camp Counselors

Camp Counselors are expected to serve in multiple roles. Counselors may be a: Communicator, Leader, Mentor, Teacher, and Teammate as a camp counselor.

Communicator

Before camp even begins, it is important for camp counselors to recognize their role as a communicator and advocate. A communicator is a person who is able to exchange information, news, or ideas. Camp counselors need to effectively communicate with their 4-H professional, their camp director, and other counselors. It is also a counselor's responsibility to communicate and advocate for camp. As a camp counselor you might visit 4-H clubs, schools, and other community groups and promote camp. Knowing how to communicate about camp and making sure you are talking about camp positively is an important part of being a communicator.

Some characteristics of an effective communicator are:

- They actively listen to their audience and others to better understand what they need to communicate. Sometimes the best communication is just assuring others that you are listening to them.
- Making sure you are empathetic and looking to understand how others are feeling about the words you are saying.
- Your nonverbal motions and actions are reflecting your words. Keep eye contact and make sure the tone of your voice matches what you are trying to communicate.
- Staying positive and showing enthusiasm about what you are talking about. Make sure to have positive comments about whom you are talking to and always communicate camp in a positive way.

Leader

Camp counselors are often seen as leaders but what is leadership? Core elements that successful leaders possess may include: courage, discipline, motivation, planning and initiative, trust, and understanding yourself and others.

Courage – the strength to face difficulty, danger, or harm, even if afraid

Discipline – the practice of obeying rules, codes, and correcting behavior

Motivation – the state of having a strong reason to act or accomplish something, or encouraging others to act or accomplish something

Planning & Initiative – the mindset to actively set forth goals and objectives and then acting upon those goals and objectives

Trust – placing confidence in a person by the belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone

Understanding Self & Others – the ability to understand how you as person functions and how others work

Camp counselors serve as leaders when they are able to:

- See the “big picture” or goals of camp,
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the group and draw upon strengths to achieve a common goal
- Assume leadership roles when appropriate but do not always need to be in charge
- Allow others to lead when the time or task is appropriate

Camp counselors may lead as chairs of a committee or team (such as songs, campfire, signature, etc.), group/tribe, sessions/workshops, and more.

One simple way to better understand yourself as a leader is to be aware of different leadership styles. Leadership styles can be described in numerous ways. Utilizing the styles listed below, which one best describes you?

Autocratic Leadership – autocratic leaders rely on power and authority to make decisions. They make decisions without consulting their team members. This style can be helpful when decisions need to be made quickly and there is no need for team input. However, this style can offend and hurt teammates as they do not feel included.

Democratic Leadership – democratic leaders rely on charisma and information when making decisions. They include their teammates in the decision-making process and encourage their team to be engaged. Teammates often are satisfied with decisions and are more likely to carry out the decisions.

Laissez-faire Leadership – laissez-faire leaders rely on others when making decisions. They give a lot of freedom and provide support, resources, and guidance when asked but otherwise do not get involved. This style can lead to satisfaction in the team unless team members do not manage their time well or do not have self-motivation.

Mentor

Camp Counselors are often seen as mentors to younger campers and to other counselors. A mentor is an experienced and trusted person who gives another person advice and help over a period of time. Campers and counselors trust that counselors serving as mentors will guide them and advise them to make the best possible decisions during camp. Campers that you mentor may be from your cabin and/or your tribe or group. Counselors that you mentor may also be from your cabin and/or your tribe or group. Additionally, they may be assigned to you by your Camp Director through the training and program planning process.

A good mentor will exhibit some of the following characteristics:

- Demonstrates a positive attitude and acts as a positive role model
- Takes a personal interest in the mentorship
- Is willing to share their knowledge, skills, and experience
- Exhibits enthusiasm
- Values the growth and learning of the mentee
- Provides guidance and feedback
- Is nonjudgmental toward others

Think about a mentorship at camp. A camper might come to a counselor looking for guidance on what they should do during free time. A good mentor would take the time to hear what the camper is interested in, suggest activities positively, and would encourage them to choose something both fun and that pushes them to grow. Perhaps the camper is struggling to make friends so the counselor suggests playing some games with other campers instead of reading a book in the cabin.

Teacher

Teaching is another role that camp counselors fulfill. Counselors teach songs, games, activities, and workshops. Being knowledgeable about different teaching styles can help accommodate the various learning styles of campers and topics when you are teaching at camp.

Authority Style

The authority style is focused on one-way communication in which the counselor projects information and campers are expected to take in the information.

Pros: This style is helpful when communicating the agenda for the day, important rules, or instructions they must follow.

Cons: If this style is used too frequently or for too long of a time, the campers might begin to not pay attention as there is little to no interaction or movement. This style is hardest for campers ages 9-11.

Demonstrator Style

The demonstrator style is utilized when you as a counselor are showing campers what they need to know. Counselors will act out or demonstrate what they are trying to teach.

Pros: At camp this style is often demonstrated through skits, or modeling the behavior we want campers to learn. This style is helpful when teaching things that are visual such as dances, movements to songs, skits, games, and activities.

Cons: This style is difficult to accommodate each camper's needs in large groups. It also relies on the ability of the campers being able to see what the counselor is teaching. If the counselor cannot be seen, this style is ineffective.

Facilitator Style

The facilitator style promotes campers to self-learn and helps campers problem solve and develop critical thinking skills. Facilitator style is allowing the campers to teach themselves and discover the information through conversation and open-ended questions led by the counselor.

Pros: This style encourages teamwork and campers often enjoy this style more. At camp this style is often used when leading workshops, creating cabin rules, and making decisions.

Cons: This style can possibly take away the counselors authority and the campers are more in charge which could lead to the wrong outcomes.

Delegator Style

This style encourages discovery based learning and motivates the campers to work together. The delegator style would have camp counselors provide a set of instructions and then step back and observe the campers as they discover and teach themselves.

Pros: This style is best used when simple step-by-step instructions or a list can be provided to campers to complete a task. Examples of utilizing this style at camp may be for giving instructions on cleaning the cabin or setting the dining hall.

Cons: There is less formal teaching and the counselor may not have the ability to support individual camper's needs to learn as they are less involved with this teaching style.

Blended Style

The blended style focuses on combining the counselor's personality and interests with campers' learning needs.

Pros: This style can be inclusive to all campers when counselors tailor their teaching to every camper's needs. This style is great for small groups and complex tasks. Counselors might use this style at camp when teaching canoeing, high ropes, crafts, and other workshops or sessions.

Cons: When using this style, counselors can run the risk of trying to accommodate too many campers with their individual needs that they spread themselves too thin and hinder learning. This style may not be effective in large groups.

When using a teaching style, it is also helpful to think about the camper's learning style and what fits best for each situation and each camper. We will cover learning styles more in the camper section.

Teammate

Camp Counselors will undoubtedly be a part of many teams. These teams may include the whole camp counselor team, committees, tribes, cabins, teaching sessions or workshops, and more. It is important to realize that you are not planning and conducting camp on your own. Therefore, you must learn how to be a good teammate and what a successful team looks like.

A successful team uses some of the roles and skills we have already talked about. Good teams will:

1. communicate with each other openly
2. focus on their goals and results
3. allow each member to contribute their fair share
4. support each other
5. have teammates that are diverse in ideas, personalities, and thoughts
6. have a leader
7. be organized
8. enjoy their work

In order to be a good team member you must think about each of these eight qualities of a good team and make sure your team is striving to look like this. However, you cannot force others to change so you must start by looking at yourself and making sure you are following these qualities yourself.

Balance with all roles

It can be challenging to balance the various roles of being a leader, mentor, teacher, communicator, and teammate. Sometimes you might be in more than one role at once. You might be teaching a song in front of the whole camp while you are also trying to communicate the importance of the song with another counselor who is helping you teach. In that situation you might be a leader, teacher, communicator, and teammate all at once.

The key to balancing these roles is to be aware which role is the most important for you to be in at that time. A good question to ask yourself is, what role are you mainly doing right now? Are you mainly teaching right now or should you focus on being a mentor? There usually isn't a right answer but by getting in the habit of thinking about each role you are in can help you better respond to campers, other counselors, and how you think about planning certain things for camp.

Responsibility to Others

We've mentioned before that camp counselors are responsible for their campers. During camp, counselors are making sure that campers are physically and emotionally safe, having fun, sleeping/getting rest, using good hygiene, following camp rules, and more.

However, counselors are responsible to other individuals as well.

Camp counselors have a responsibility to their campers' parents by making sure that they take care of their children. Parents are entrusting their children with you and are expecting you to take care of them.

Counselors also have a responsibility to represent their hometowns, communities, and schools. If you were to leave your camp facility a mess, then that reflects back on your community, school, and hometown.

Lastly, you have a responsibility to your camping program. Counselors are responsible for making sure you talk about camp and 4-H positively. They think about ways to grow camp, and are talking about camp and the 4-H program in their schools, communities, and clubs.

Closing

Joining Ohio 4-H, including serving as a camp counselor, is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University.

Serving as a camp counselor is an exciting learning experience. It is an honor to be selected to serve in this capacity. Remember that being a camp counselor is a privilege, meaning that you are taking on a position with enormous responsibilities and expectations.

Failure to adhere to the responsibilities and expectations of this privilege may lead you to being dismissed from this role.

Pilotable Version

Section 3: Campers

Remember that in 4-H, campers are typically ages 5 to 8 (Cloverbud Day Camp) and 8 to 13 years old (residential overnight camp). Depending on the size of the camping facility there could be anywhere from 50 to over 200 campers at camp at one time.

Understanding Campers

One of the best ways to prepare for camp is to better understand the campers. Learning about camper behaviors, the different stages of development, how to deal with difficult situations and challenging campers. The more we prepare before camp about how we might engage with campers, the better we will be when these situations arise at camp.

Camp is for the campers

The first and probably most important thing to remember about campers is that they are the very reason we put on camp. You may often hear that “Camp is for the Campers”. We are to focus on making sure our campers have a safe, fun, and educational camp. You may find that sometimes you have to choose between what you want to do and what the campers want to do. You should always choose what the campers want. Our role as staff and counselors often require us to sacrifice our time and energy to make sure our campers are having the best camp experience possible. Remember, camp isn't for you, it's for the campers, but if they are having fun, chances are you will too.

Setting Healthy Boundaries/Clear Expectations

It is healthy in a counselor-camper relationship to set expectations and boundaries. It is better to set these boundaries and expectations early at camp, often within the first few hours. Counselors will need to have a discussion with their campers and each group they work with the first time they are together. Here are some different groups of campers you may want to go over expectations and boundaries with; cabin campers, your tribe or group, and your table in the dining hall. Ensure that you are setting similar expectations for everyone and that you stay consistent as not to have any favorites or give certain campers special treatment. If you are in charge of the campers with another counselor, make sure you approach the expectations as a team. Lastly, set expectations high at the beginning of the week as it easier to adjust them as the week goes on.

Creating a Welcoming Culture

From the very first moment you meet your campers you should begin to make a positive and welcoming culture. Greet each camper, learn their names, introduce them to each other. If you can create a welcoming and positive culture and space in the cabin, they will have a better outlook for the rest of camp.

Ages and Stages

Youth can be difficult to understand. In order to better appreciate campers, it is helpful to recognize how youths' age impacts the way we interact with them. We often categorize youth into different development stages based on the age that the youth is. There are four different areas that youth develop in: physical, emotional, social, and intellectual.

Physical Development focuses on the growth and maturity on gross and fine motor skills. It involves control of the body using muscles and physical coordination.

Emotional Development is the ability to recognize, express, and manage feelings at different stages of life. This development is largely affected by relationships.

Social Development refers to the process in which a child interacts with others around them. This will change based on how they perceive their own individuality within their communities.

Intellectual Development are the changes that occur in a person's capacities for thinking, reasoning, relating, judging, conceptualizing, and more.

On the following pages we will go through different age ranges and what their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development is and some guidelines for activities you can plan for them.

Pilotable Version

5– 7 years old

Physical

- starting to master physical skills
- better control of large muscles than small muscles
- high activity level (restless and fidgety)
- struggle with eye-hand coordination

Emotional

- see fairness as being nice to others so they will be nice in return
- seek adult approval of their emotions
- behave in ways to avoid punishment
- expressed feelings are typically short-term

Socially

- learning to be friends with others and have many “best friends”
- becoming more aware of peers and their opinions
- beginning to experience empathy for others
- very family oriented (prefer family members over friends)
- becoming aware of sexual differences
- want their environment structured similar to their home structure

Intellectual

- increasing attention span (activities best limited to fifteen to thirty minutes)
- more interested in the process than the product
- learning to sort things into categories and arrange patterns
- learning concepts of right and wrong and cause and effect
- struggle with multitasking
- are beginning to distinguish between reality and fantasy, but may be afraid of scary figures

Activity Guidelines for 5-7 Year Olds

- experimentation using bodies, idea, and materials in different ways
- active games (climbing, balance, rhythm, running, etc.)
- practicing eye-hand coordination (cutting, pasting, coloring, drawing, throwing, etc.)
- group games and sharing (taking turns, helping others, listening to others)
- freedom to things for themselves
- use of senses (eyes, nose, ears, mouth, and skin)
- finding appropriate ways of channeling emotions and behaviors

8 – 10 years old

Physical

- muscle development starts to steadily increase
- increased strength, balance, and coordination
- very active and energetic
- girls and boys mature at different rates (boys mature slower psychically)

Emotional

- accepts parents'/families' beliefs as fact
- admires and imitates older boys and girls
- start to develop decision making skills
- begin to take responsibility for their own actions
- needs acceptance from peer groups
- emphasizes similarities between self and others
- needs involvement with a caring adult
- self-conscious, afraid to fail, sensitive to criticism
- feel they can do no wrong and are quick to correct others
- name-calling and teasing are methods for responding to being upset
- feel "too" cool for emotion

Social

- sees adults as authority
- follows rules out of respect for authority
- can be noisy and argumentative
- feels loyalty to friendship group, can be exclusive to those outside of friendship group

Intellectual

- quick, eager and enthusiastic
- vary greatly in academic abilities, interests, and reasoning skills
- increased attention span, but interests change rapidly
- beginning to learn about moral judgements, applying principals of right and wrong
- wants to know how to, what and why of things
- sees things as black and white and yes and no and have difficulty with opinions different than theirs

Activity Guidelines for 8 – 10 Year Olds

- Organized team games and sports where everyone can be successful
- Work in groups that are cooperative
- Explore interests in different hobbies
- Explore and investigate the world
- Discuss others viewpoints
- Express feelings and creativity though creative writing or acting
- Discuss reasons explanation for rules and decisions

11-13 years old

Physical

- exhibit a wide range of sexual maturity and growth patterns between genders and within gender groups
- rapid change in physical appearance, may appear awkward or disproportionate
- may try experimental behavior to enhance sensory stimulation, e.g. drugs, alcohol, sex

Emotional

- compares themselves to others
- concerned about development and emerging sexually
- see themselves as always on center stage
- conscientious about body changes
- concerned about being liked by friends over family
- strive for independence, yet want and need parents help
- seek privacy from adults
- want to be a part of something important
- aware of degrees of emotion and seek to find the right words to describe their feelings
- exaggeration and sarcasm are frequently used to describe subtle meanings

Social

- emphasis of sexuality shifts from relational to attraction
- looking more toward peers than parents
- seek acceptance and trust
- tend to regard sex in depersonalized way
- search for adult role models and often identify with admired adult heroes and celebrities
- begin to question authority
- begin to question family values
- willing to submerge self for benefit of group
- discipline can be a problem because of the spirit of the group
- friendship groups or cliques are often small but intense
- more realistic understanding of who they are and what they can do
- more interested in social activities

Intellectual

- need information in order to make decisions
- find justice and equality to be important issues
- think abstractly and hypothetically
- can solve problems that have no more than one variable
- can imagine consequences
- ready for in-depth, long-term experiences
- have moved from fantast to realistic focus on their life goals

Activity Guidelines for 11-13 year olds

- Structured and adult-like activities
- Explore other cultures, foods, languages, and customs
- Focus on completing projects or the product
- Opportunities to make the decisions
- Interested in having activities involving other genders and learning to engage with other genders

Learning styles

Just as we talked about in the counselor section how counselors may lead very differently, campers may learn very differently. Some campers learn more by visually seeing things, others learn by hearing about it, some may need to actually do it to learn it, and others may need to tell others about it to learn. These make up four different learning styles: visual, aural, verbal, and physical.

Visual (Spatial)

Visual or spatial learning is when youth prefer to see pictures, images, or someone demonstrating what they want done. At camp this looks like counselors showing everyone a line dance, counselors acting out the game as they teach it, or any position in which the campers are seeing the behavior or actions the counselors and staff want them to exhibit.

Aural (Auditory)

Aural or auditory learning is when youth prefer to hear description of what needs done. They often learn things faster if they are related to music or sound. At camp this might be explaining the rules of camp to the tune of a song, or giving instructions at campfire to chants or rhythmic patterns.

Verbal (Linguistic)

Verbal or linguistic learning is when youth prefer to use words either in speech or writing to explain to others what they have learned. They often do not fully learn the behavior or idea until they have the chance to explain it or describe it. At camp this may show up when counselors ask campers to lead an activity or a camper is asked to repeat back what was said to them.

Physical (Kinesthetic)

Physical or kinesthetic learning is when youth must actively do that activity or behavior in order to learn it. They best learn through games, movement, or hands-on tasks. This learning style is often the most prevalent at camp and these learners often thrive at camp. At camp this may be doing a practice round of a game, having them sing or dance parts of the song as they learn, or everyone practicing something together before doing it on their own.

Each of the learning styles are important to keep in mind when you are planning activities, teaching campers, or trying to communicate with them. It is also important to note that some campers may learn better in one-on-one situations while others learn best in a group. Get to know your campers and see how they like to learn. Ask them what ways the learn best.

Teaching Life Skills

A skill is a learned ability. Life Skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live. 4-H uses a framework based upon the 4-H Pledge to organize the delivery of experiences that support the growth and development of youth. 4-H refers to this framework as a “Targeting Life Skills Model” (Hendricks, 1998). This model addresses the skills within the five competency areas that youth development traditionally addresses.

4-H Focus of Youth Competencies

HEAD: Knowledge, Reasoning and Creativity Competencies

Thinking: using one’s mind to form ideas and make decisions; to imagine, to examine carefully in the mind, to consider.

Managing: using resources to accomplish a purpose.

HEART: Personal/Social Competencies

Relating: establishing a mutual or reciprocal connection between two people that is wholesome and meaningful to both.

Caring: showing understanding, kindness, concern and affection for others.

HAND: Vocational/Citizenship Competencies

Giving: providing, supplying, or causing to happen (social responsibility).

Working: accomplishing something or earning pay to support oneself through physical or mental effort.

HEALTH: Health/Physical Competencies Living:

Acting or behaving: the manner or style of daily life.

Being: living one’s life; pursuing one’s basic nature; involved in personal development.

We use the Life Skill model even at camp as we are thinking about our campers. What skills are our campers learning? Are we providing opportunities for them to learn these skills?

Different Camper Groups

As a counselor you will work with campers in different groups. These groups will be made up of different campers and the group may look different from camp to camp but let's briefly look at each camper group.

Cabin

Cabins are made up of campers of the same gender and often the same age. Depending on the camping facility there may be anywhere from 6 to 14 campers in a cabin. There is also anywhere from 1 to 3 or even 4 counselors in a cabin. Here are some tips in working with your cabin group:

- This will be their home away from home so make sure they are able to feel comfortable in the cabin. You could decorate it, play games, and just encourage them to have fun and be relaxed in their cabin.
- It's a good practice to never have a camper hanging out in the cabin alone. When campers are alone in the cabin that is when they might be stealing or behaving in other inappropriate behaviors.
- Make sure that the cabin can also be a place of rest for your campers. Some campers may need personal time and space and might need a calm place to think and relax. Make sure that campers get the chance to relax in their cabin and that they have the chance to go to sleep on time.

Tribes or Groups

Tribes or groups are often made up of campers from different gender, and different ages. These groups often have a goal or come together for an activity or purpose. These groups are often larger and could consist of anywhere from 12 to 24 campers in a group supervised by a group of 3 to 7 counselors. Here are some tips in working with your tribe/group:

- Take time to get know each other. This is a very large group and these campers might not see each other as much.
- Make sure you and the other counselors in your tribe/group are working together as a team. You should plan and instruct as a team.
- Involve yourself in the games and activities if possible, play with the campers, and if you cannot be involved, cheer for them!
- Come up with a short chant or cheer that the group can remember so that you can get their attention and also create group morale.
- Your group will reflect the counselor's personality. If there is a competition and you as a counselor are not excited about it, your group will not be excited about it.

Table

Your table group of campers are the campers you sit with in the dining hall. Depending on how your camp is set up, you might be with the same group of campers all week or a different group of campers every meal. Although you don't spend much time with this group it is important that you pay attention. It is important that our campers are eating and getting energy to do all the activities for the day. Here are some tips in working with your table group:

- Have daily discussion questions to ask your campers so that they feel welcomed and comfortable at the table.
- Make sure your campers are fed before you serve yourself.

- Keep an eye out to see if all of your table campers are eating. If a camper isn't eating, without creating a scene, ask them if they are feeling ok. Make sure to communicate to them that it's important to eat. Work with your Camp Director and Camp Facilities Manager to see if there are any alternatives to the meal. However, camp is also about trying new things so encourage them to try the food on the menu first.
- This is a perfect time to remind your campers to hydrate and use the restroom.
- Encourage your campers to drink a glass of water or two before drinking punch or lemonade so they stay hydrated.

Camper Behaviors

A behavior is the way that a camper conduct themselves or acts. Each camper is different, but as staff and counselors we should be aware of come different behaviors.

Homesickness

Homesickness is the feeling of missing home, which is a distress or impairment caused by an actual or anticipated separation from home. Missing home is characterized by acute longing and preoccupying thoughts of home. Many youngsters miss parents, friends, home, or pets and become despondent and tearful. One of the best preventive measures is to raise the camper's comfort levels right from the start. Make sure they feel welcome and know what will be happening the first day. Keep creating a culture in which they are included and busy. If a camper is homesick, some strategies to decrease the level of homesickness are:

- Find a friend for the camper to do an activity with
- Encourage them to do an activity they enjoy
- Have them focus on the next ten minutes or the present

Overly Engaged/ Excited

Some campers are so excited and might often come across as overly engaged. These campers often always volunteer first and want to be selected to do activities. The excitement and involvement in camp is a good thing and we need to always thank our campers when they show excitement or a willingness to be involved. However, sometimes an overly excited or engaged camper may be taking opportunities of learning or involvement away from other campers. As a counselor you should:

- Thank the camper for their excitement and willingness to be involved.
- Explain to them that at camp we need to make sure that everyone gets the chance to have a turn.
- Redirect the overly engaged camper to cheer for their teammates or to be in charge of cheering.
- Keep them involved in some way that makes them feel important.

Disengaged

The other extreme from overly engaged campers are campers who are completely disengaged. They either want nothing to do with the activities or camp or they are distracted by other things and do not find the current activity or program exciting. As a counselor, it is your responsibility to figure out what about the current activity or camp isn't engaging or interesting. Perhaps it is just this one activity and they just need to sit out of the activity. But if the disengagement continues try to talk with the camper about their passions or about what does excite them. As a counselor you should:

- Acknowledge that the camper isn't engaging and without making a scene ask them how they are doing.
- If they just aren't interested in the activity, sit and chat with them. Ask them about what they like to do, what they care about, what makes them exciting.
- See if anything that excites the camper is happening at camp and try to get them excited about that idea or activity.
- Give that camper special permission and tell them little "secrets" about the activity so as to try to encourage some excitement.

Anger Management

Some campers may have a tendency to act out in anger or may be quick to act upon anger. It is important to recognize signs that may precede acts of violence or aggression. It is better to be proactive with a camper who struggles with anger and aggression than respond to an outburst of aggression. Although it is impossible to fully identify a camper who is about to act out in aggression, here are some indicators the National School Safety Center identified:

- Engaging in tantrum
- Struggles with being disciplined
- Talks about and prefers movies or books that deal with violent themes
- Is being bullied or is bullying younger campers
- Involved in name calling, cursing, and offensive language
- Demonstrates significant mood swings
- Preoccupied or highly interested in weapons or using tools for weapons
- Tends to be alone and struggles with friends
- Makes threats to others

Once you have identified a camper with anger management or aggression issues, it is best to take them away from high stress or difficult situations. When you see them getting frustrated or angry, go on a walk with them, encourage them to breathe slowly or count to ten. Find ways to redirect their anger. Remind them that it's ok to be angry we just need to find positive ways of expressing our anger.

Bullying

Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt another. Bullying happens when a person or group of people want to have power over another and use their power to get their way at the expense of something else. Bullying also happens on social media and the internet. This type of bullying can lead to persons being hurt during or between camping seasons and be especially hurtful when targeted with meanness and exclusion.

Behavioral Disorders

Behavioral disorders, also known as disruptive behavioral disorders are common amongst young children and you might have a camper who has a behavioral disorder. These disorders are when a youth struggles to with social and emotional skills for a long period of time and the behavior is disruptive to their lives. Behavioral disorders can have a variety of causes and can be both attributed to biological and environmental causes.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a condition that impairs an individual's ability to properly focus and to control impulsive behaviors, or it may make the person overactive. Signs of a camper having ADHD may be:

- Not being able to focus (inattentiveness)
 - Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes
 - Has difficulty keeping attention during tasks or play
 - Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
 - Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish tasks
 - Has problems organizing tasks and activities
 - Avoids or dislikes tasks that require sustained mental effort
 - Often loses toys, assignments, pencils, books, or tools needed for tasks or activities
 - Is easily distracted
 - Is often forgetful in daily activities
- Being extremely active (hyperactivity)
 - Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
 - Leaves seat when remaining seated is expected
 - Runs about or climbs in inappropriate situations
 - Has problems playing or working quietly
 - Is often "on the go," acts as if "driven by a motor"
 - Talks excessively
- Not being able to control behavior (impulsivity)
 - Blurts out answers before questions have been completed
 - Has difficulty awaiting turn
 - Interrupts or intrudes on others (butts into conversations or games)

Some techniques for working with campers who have ADHD are:

- Seating them away from distractions, perhaps near you
- Make activities exciting, funny, and mysterious
- Change the teaching styles or methods you use to increase focus
- Make learning active
- Play games that require attention like Simon Says, musical chairs, or lover's leap
- Make sure they are spending time outdoors

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

ODD is a behavioral disorder characterized by hostile, irritable and uncooperative attitudes in children. Children with ODD may be spiteful or annoying on purpose, and they generally direct their negative actions at authority figures. Some signs of ODD are:

- Frequent temper tantrum
- Excessive arguing with adults or authority figures
- Often questioning rules
- Active defiance and refusal of adult or authority figure's requests
- Deliberate attempts to upset or annoy others
- Blames others for their mistake
- Often touching and picking on others
- Could be physically aggressive

Some tips in working with ODD campers are:

- Avoid power struggles. You do not have to always correct them, let them figure out if they made a mistake.
- If you make a mistake simply apologize, correct it, and move on
- Have a safe space for the camper to walk away and calm down. Often youth are aware they are getting frustrated and need that time and space
- Give them choices and then walk away allowing them to process the choices they've been given. If they try to argue, repeat the choices and then walk away.
- Get to know the camper on a personal level. Youth with ODD are often frustrated with themselves and are looking for relationships and people to help them with their anger.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

OCD is characterized by fears and irrational thoughts that lead to obsessions, which, in turn, cause compulsions. If a camper has OCD, they will engage in compulsive repetitive behavior despite realizing the negative consequences of – or even the unreasonable nature of their actions. Performing those repetitive acts does nothing but relieve stress temporarily. Some repetitive behavior they might exhibit are:

- Compulsions to wash their hand frequently and for long times
- Counting things multiple times
- Having a specific ritual in order to move from one thing to the next
- Compulsive cleaning and tidying

Some ways to engage with campers with OCD at camp are:

- Allowing their compulsions to finish (it is not your job to fix them or give them therapy)
- Talk with them about what fear or anxiety may be causing the compulsions
- Do not bring attention to their compulsions
- When asked by others what's happening, respond "we're good", or "we're just hanging here".

Managing Behaviors

As camp counselors and staff it is our responsibility to try to manage and change negative behaviors into positive ones. Managing behavior is an ongoing task and require perseverance and patience. Here are some tips on how to better manage camper behavior:

- When correcting behavior remember to focus on the behavior not the camper. Tell them that their behavior or the action was not okay, not that they are not okay. For example, when they aren't listening it is better to say "When you don't listen to others it can be rude to them." Compared to just saying "You are so rude."
- Make sure to encourage them to do good things instead of shaming them when they do something bad. It is more impactful when you highlight the positive way a camper should and is behaving instead of correcting them. Make sure to always tell them what you expect from them.
- By setting expectations and rules before an activity or at the beginning of camp you are creating ways to prevent negative behavior from happening. This is a lot easier and more effective than correcting and reacting to negative behavior once it happens.

All behavior is purposeful and a camper will continue to behave in a particular manner because the behavior is effective in some way. The consequences of a particular behavior are what determine if the behavior will occur again. This holds true for both desired and undesired behavior.

Pilotable Version

Section 4: Health and Wellness

One of our main goals as counselors and staff is to have a safe and healthy camp. Although you would think the nurse is the only one who has to worry about health and wellness, it is actually counselors who have the most influence on whether or not campers and camp are healthy and well.

Health

Counselors are the staff working with campers the most and see how they act on a day to day basis. You are the person who will recognize health issues when they begin to arise. You should know the members of your health care staff (or nurse) and where they are located. Ask questions of your camp nurse and director about procedures and policies. What do you do if the camp nurse isn't in the nurse's station?

Camp Health Risks

Camp is a place with many risks. We will talk more about risks and risk management in the next section but we wanted to mention some common health risks at camp. Remember that the health care staff (nurse) has access to medical records and will communicate individual campers needs to you at the start of camp.

Insects and Wildlife

Camp is not just your home for the week, there are insects and other wildlife that live here all year long and you are invading their home. Here are some common insects and wildlife you may encounter that could pose a health risk to you or your campers.

Lice

Lice are tiny, wingless, parasitic insects that feed on human blood and live in the hair on human bodies and heads. Lice are easily spread through closer personal contact and by sharing belongings such as combs, brushes, hats, headgear, pillows and bedding. Symptoms include experiencing intense itching, tickling movement from hair, and small red bumps around the infected area. You are able to see adult lice as they are about the size of a sesame seed or slightly larger. If you or a camper have a suspicion that you have lice on your body, let the nurse and camp director know as soon as possible.

Bug bites

There are many bugs that will bite a human or other living thing. The most common bites come from spiders, bed bugs and mosquitoes. Some tips to avoid bug bites are:

- Wearing bug spray when playing outside.
- As the evening gets cooler wear clothes that cover arms and legs.
- Avoid areas of tall grass or that are unkempt.

Ultimately you will most likely get some sort of bug bite before camp is over, but that is the reality of being at camp. At the first sign of bug bites, check with the nurse for recommendations on how to treat. Excessive itching from most bug bites can be relieved by a cool shower, but if the bitten area begins to swell or turn colors, notify the nurse again.

Stinging Insects (Bees/Wasps)

Bee/Wasp stings for most people are just annoying, but you should confirm that the camper is not allergic as soon as the incident occurs. If there are no allergy concerns the camper will typically experience a temporary sharp pain, swelling, redness, warmth, and itching. The symptoms will typically recede in the next couple of days.

If someone is allergic to bee/wasp stings or they get stung multiple times at once there can be more problems and it could even be life-threatening. A severe allergic reaction to stings may cause hives, pale skin, severe itching, swelling of the tongue and difficulty breathing, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, and potential loss of consciousness. If you suspect a severe reaction to a sting, do not leave the person alone, and have someone else contact the nurse.

Bed Bugs

Bed Bugs are very common in Ohio. Bed bug bite reactions vary from person to person. Some people have no reaction to bites while others will develop a raised itchy red welt at the site of the bite. They often appear as two or more bites in a row and are often found on exposed areas of the body, such as the face, neck arms and shoulders. Bed bug bites resemble many other types of insect bites. If you are suspicious that the bites may be caused by bed bugs you should notify the nurse and/or camp staff immediately so that proper protocols can be taken. This protocol should also be followed if you notice signs of bed bugs in the cabin, such as shed bug skins, egg shells or live bugs.

Poison Ivy, Poison Oak and Poison Sumac

If you know that you or a camper has been exposed to poisonous plants you should immediately wash the exposed area with rubbing alcohol or alcohol pads if at all possible. If rubbing alcohol is not available, wash the area with warm soapy water. You should then visit the nurse. A rash or blisters may develop within 12 to 48 hours after contact. If this occurs, a revisit to the nurse is in order.

Bodily fluids

The list of bodily fluids includes substances such as; blood, vomit, urine, feces and saliva. You are not to come in personal contact with any of the above. If you have a camper who needs immediate attention, you should provide them with a clean bandage or clean cloth and take them directly to the nurse or send for the nurse if they should not be moved.

Do not attempt to clean up the substance or the area yourself. Make sure to isolate the area so others will not come in contact with the fluids. Immediately contact adult staff and follow camp procedures.

Food Allergies and Intolerances

Participants with dietary restrictions and/or food allergies should be identified by the nurse and he/she will communicate that information to you at the beginning of camp. This may affect how you serve your meals and or place further restrictions on your cabin.

General First Aid

Make sure you are aware of the location of the nurse's cabin, and how to locate the nurse at all times. You should know where the AED (Automatic Electronic Defibrillator) is located in the event that you may have to retrieve it in case of an emergency. Your camp director and/or nurse should go over what their expectations are for general first aid.

Campers with Special Needs

The camp director/nurse should communicate with you prior to the beginning of camp if you are going to have a camper/fellow counselor with special needs. Make sure that you are comfortable with the situation and ask questions as needed.

Health Conditions

Bed Wetting

It is not unusual for younger campers to be faced with the embarrassing situation of bed-wetting in a residential camp setting. Bed-wetting is not a behavioral problem. No child wants to wake up in a wet bed. Camp is not the place to try to remedy the problem. The role of the counselor is to avoid embarrassment or humiliation of the camper before his or her peers. A procedure for handling the clothes and bedding should be developed so that a counselor can deal with this quietly and sensitively without any punishment to the camper. If a counselor is aware of a camper who tends to wet the bed, they may:

- Encourage the camper to limit fluid intake right before bed.
- Remind them to use the restroom before bed.
- Wake them in the middle of the night and walk them to the restroom.
- If such an incident does occur, notify the adult staff so that they may remove the bedding at a time when the cabin is empty so the confidentiality can remain a priority. Staff will then launder bedding and return.
- If the incident would occur in the night, quietly notify adult staff to remove bedding and replace with extra bedding/sleeping bag that is kept on site for this purpose.

Asthma

If you have someone in your care with asthma, you will be notified of this condition at the beginning of camp. Procedure will vary depending on the individual. Be sure you know the plan that has been put in place. This could involve making sure they have a rescue inhaler with them at all times or that you are to take them directly to the nurse if you identify shortness of breath.

Diabetes

If you have someone in your care with diabetes, you will be notified at the beginning of camp. Procedures can vary according to the individual and you should follow the plan put in place by your camp director/nurse.

Health Emergencies

Make sure that you have reviewed and are familiar with the policies and procedures put in place for health emergencies by your camp director/nurse prior to the beginning of camp.

Mental Health

Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Missing Home

Attending camp can bring out a variety of emotions and behaviors. If someone expresses any of the above, please consult the nurse immediately. If you have concerns that the person is in danger accompany them to the nurse or send someone to retrieve the nurse if they will comply.

Suicidal Tendencies

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Counselors should be alert to signs of suicidal tendencies. Talk with your camp director and have a plan for what to do if you are concerned for someone's life. A camper or staff member that may be thinking about attempting suicide may:

- Have sudden changes in behavior
- Give away prized possessions
- Threaten suicide or talk about previous suicide attempts
- Talk about different methods of suicide
- Demonstrate reckless behavior or self-destructive acts
- Withdraw from friends and family
- Lose interest in activities
- Express feelings of hopelessness and/or worthlessness
- Show interest in death (perhaps expresses it in artwork or stories)
- Make statements about not being missed if they were gone
- Ends friendships and relationships (cutting off friends or breaking up with significant other)
- May be excessively sleeping or not getting sleep
- Experience chronic headaches or stomachaches
- Have a change in personal hygiene or appearance

If you are considering that a camper, counselor, or staff is experiencing suicidal tendencies you should talk with camp director and/or the nurse. If the individual experiencing suicidal tendencies confides in you, express concern, listen attentively, be empathetic in a nonjudgmental manner, don't promise confidentiality, and remind them that there is help and things will get better. Most importantly, do not assume you can help them by yourself.

Eating disorder

If you have concerns that someone in your care is exhibiting signs of an eating disorder, contact the nurse for further direction. Some indicators of someone experiencing an eating disorder may be:

- Fixating on their body weight and shape.
- Basing their self-esteem on weight or body shape.
- Dramatically changing what they eat and the way they eat, such as restricting what they eat, or bingeing and then purging after they eat, or eating enormous quantities of food and not purging.
- Experiencing a lack of control over problematic eating behaviors.
- Avoiding the severity of the situation, such as making light of or becoming defensive when confronted by others about their eating patterns.
- Feeling shame and guilt about their eating habits.
- Being addicted to food such that they feel uncontrollable cravings for certain foods, such as sugar, and being unable to control their intake of these foods.

Counselor Health

Camp counselors and staff are expected to be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own health and well-being. Counselors should be aware of their own health and wellness and take time to care for themselves.

Self-care

In order for you to have a positive camp experience, you must take care of yourself first. Arrive at camp well rested, hydrated and nourished with a positive attitude. Camp counselors work long hours and there are high demands on your time. Make sure that you eat properly, drink plenty of fluids, sleep when possible, maintain personal hygiene and take a short break when you can. Remember that you are a role model and the campers will model their health after yours!

Wellness (adapted from OSU's 9 Dimensions of Wellness)

"Wellness" is an active, ongoing process which involves becoming aware of and taking steps toward a healthier, happier, more successful life. Following are the multiple aspects of wellness.

- **Physical Wellness** - The physically well person gets an adequate amount of sleep, eats a balanced and nutritious diet, engages in exercise for 150 minutes per week, attends regular medical check-ups and practices safe and healthy sexual relations.
- **Social Wellness** - The socially well person has a network of support based on interdependence, mutual trust, respect and has developed a sensitivity and awareness towards the feelings of others.
- **Emotional Wellness** - The emotionally well person can identify, express and manage the entire range of feelings and would consider seeking assistance to address areas of concern.
- **Intellectual Wellness** - The intellectually well person values lifelong learning and seeks to foster critical thinking, develop moral reasoning, expand worldviews and engage in education for the pursuit of knowledge.

- **Creative Wellness** - The creatively well person values and actively participates in a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences as a means to understand and appreciate the surrounding world.
- **Environmental Wellness** - The environmentally well person recognizes the responsibility to preserve, protect and improve the environment and appreciates the interconnectedness of nature and the individual.

Cultural Competency

As a counselor you need to be aware of the different cultures of individuals. You are to be the model of acceptance by being ok with yourself and acknowledge the opinions of others. Identity is the idea of who you are. There are many different things that make up people's identities. Some facets of an identity are:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Socio-Economic Status
- Gender
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- National Origin
- Native Language
- Physical, Emotional, Mental Development (Dis)Ability
- Age
- Religious or Spiritual Affiliation

Being aware of your campers' identities and recognizing that they might be different allows you to better understand them, create a safe and welcoming environment, and engage with the campers properly. Some identities you are able to see from the outside, some you might not know until you get to know the campers. Never assume or ask what someone's identity is. Allow them to disclose that information to you. Many of these topics shouldn't even be brought up at camp.

Section 5: Risk Management

Risk management is the term given to the process we use to identify, analyze, and manage risks during all 4-H activities. The objective of risk management is the protection of our **human**, **financial**, and **physical** resources and assets from loss or destruction.

Human Resources

Human resources are the people who are assets or are important to camp. In section 1 we mentioned those people; campers, counselors, camp director, adult staff, nurse, camp facilities manager, and program staff. When working with people there can be a lot of risk so we need to be aware of the dangers we might be putting people in.

Financial Resources

The financial resources camp has are the money and funds of the camps. This could be endowments, scholarships, grants, camp fees, and the financial budget. Camps receive funds from various sources. Risk could lead to legal suits, or loss of finances.

Physical Resources

The physical resources at camp are the things we can see and touch. They are the cabins, canoes and other programming resources, trees, and land, etc. When physical resources are damaged due to risk, they need to be fixed and maintained which also impacts financial resources.

4-H Values Health and Safety

The health and safety of 4-H youth, volunteers, staff, and the public that we serve are critically important. Through cooperation with the Ohio State University Office of Risk Management and Ohio State Extension, the Ohio 4-H program works to provide a safe environment for 4-H youth, volunteers, and staff using a risk management process.

Why is Risk Management Important to 4-H Camping?

Camp is a space in which there is a lot of risk. From a high ropes course to insect bites, camp can bring many threats to our campers, counselors, staff, property, and resources. In section 1, we mentioned that one goal of camp is to make sure that everyone has a safe experience by creating a positive environment. Counselors and staff members need to keep risk in mind when planning camp and while at camp as well.

Counselor's Role in Risk Management

When there is potential risk involved with camp there are four ways to respond: **avoiding** the risk, **transferring** the risk, **reducing** the risk, or **retaining** the risk. It is your job to decide which response is best while planning and implementing camp.

One tool that is used is the 4-H Camp Counselor Code of Conduct. The code of conduct outlines the roles and responsibilities (Section 2), as well as highlight policies and rules the counselor must follow. Read the code of conduct and become familiar with it. Reading it is a great first step to better understand the risks presented at camp.

Avoiding Risk

The first way to respond to risk is to avoid it altogether. This usually looks like closing down a section of camp, or not planning a certain activity. A certain area of camp might be unsafe after a storm or it might be under construction. In this situation, it is better to avoid that area. If an activity or program you are planning involves a lot of risk, it might be best not to do the activity or program.

For example, it might be super fun to have a fireworks show in the woods. The campers would enjoy it, but the risk of catching the trees on fire or a firework falling over and hitting a camper is too great. This is why most camping facilities ban fireworks on the property.

Transferring Risk

The second way to respond to risk is transferring the risk from your responsibility to someone else. This is often done by purchasing insurance. Most camping facilities have insurance coverage for their buildings and property. They might also have insurance coverage for bodily injury or harm to program participants. The Ohio State University, Ohio 4-H, and the OSU Department of Insurance work diligently to appropriately transfer risk, primarily through insurance or contracts.

You might also transfer risk if you bring in a guest instructor. Some instructors might have their own policies and insurance that cover them as they teach. Their teaching experiences may include shooting sports, scuba, or rock climbing and the risk of the activity would be transferred over to them.

It is important to note that not all risk gets transferred and you still have a responsibility to reduce any risk possible.

Reducing Risk

The third and most common response to risk is to reduce it. This is the number one response any camp counselor or staff member can have related to risk. For the sake of this section, we created a list of tips in which you can reduce risk:

- The best way to reduce risk is to always supervise your campers. Know where they are and make sure that you or another counselor/staff are supervising them. You should always be where you are supposed to be.
- You should know camp Emergency Protocols (what to do in the event of a fire, severe storm, tornado, missing camper, active threat etc.) and how you should respond to them. We go into more detail about some general procedures later in this section.
- When available and needed, always use safety gear/ personal protection equipment (PPE) to protect the body.

- Never abuse authority as a counselor. Counselors will not, under any circumstances, discipline youth by use of physical punishment or by failure to provide basic care (food, shelter, hygiene). Ask for help if you are not sure how to handle a situation or if it feels out of your control.
- Always travel in threes. Avoid being alone with a child whenever possible. Avoid spending any time alone with a single camper in a cabin or private area. If you need to take a lone camper to the cabin to retrieve items, remain outside the cabin or leave the cabin door open. If you need to speak to a camper one-on-one, do so in a public area where both of you may be seen but not heard.
- Prevent embarrassment. Never embarrass or shame someone about their body or actions. Never draw attention to someone while he or she is changing or showering.
- Avoid inappropriate touching of all people (campers, other counselors, and staff). Never touch a person against their will (unless they are in clear and present danger). Do not touch against someone's comfort level (expressed verbally and nonverbally). Safe places to touch are the hands, shoulders, and upper back. Never touch someone in a place that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity. Never tickle, wrestle, or otherwise touch someone in a way that is invasive to his or her privacy.

All of these suggestions do not completely eliminate risk. You might follow these tips yet still someone may be hurt or harmed, resources may be damaged or lost, and a counselor or staff member might still get into legal trouble. If you have done your best to reduce risk, you will be supported legally. But following these steps can help reduce the overall amount of risk.

Retaining Risk

The last response you may have to potential risk, is to accept that there will be risk and continue anyway. Usually this is done when there is no other alternative, the consequences are not very high, or the growth opportunities outweigh the risk.

An example would be putting on a scavenger hunt across camp even though you know campers might stray off of paths and potentially get poison ivy or someone might fall and get hurt. But because you have procedures in place (counselors are present, all parties stay on trails, etc.) they are less likely to occur.

****Overall, the camp counselors and staff should plan safe and healthy programs, and in general be alert to any dangerous conditions. If there is a case of accidents and/or injuries, you should work with the Camp Director and medical staff to respond with the appropriate health care. Keep in mind, if you ever feel like you need help managing risk, talk with your Camp Director.**

Liability and Legality

When risk is concerned, there is potential for individuals or the camp to be involved in legal lawsuits. Although this is not likely, we wanted to mention something. Liable is defined as being responsible by law or legally answerable. At camp we are liable for our campers and the environment we are in. You can be liable for doing something inappropriate or not doing something (negligence).

Policies and Procedures

Policies are the rules or guidelines that an organization adopts to help create a safe and inclusive environment. Procedures are the specific methods in which someone implements the policy in their day-to-day business. The policies and procedures are created to influence and guide decisions made in 4-H to ensure all activities and programs stay within certain boundaries. Some examples of policy might be the use of the 4-H name and emblem, electronics at camp, photo permissions, and alcohol use. Following policies and procedures help manage risk. Policy and procedures change, so to access a current list, talk to your 4-H Professional or visit <https://ohio4h.org/volunteers/volunteers/club-leaders/club-management-resources-policies-and-procedures>

Social Media

A risk that counselors and staff face is the use and misuse of social media. Often after camp, many campers might follow you or add you on Facebook. Social media can be used for good and it can keep connections after camp but it can also be a risk to camp and the counselors. If a counselor is posting negative things about other campers, counselors, or staff, it can give off the image that the counselors were not a team. Negative comments might also discourage campers from reapplying to camp or being a counselor. Also, having a hostile or offensive social media account can give camp and 4-H an image of being hostile or offensive.

Even after camp is over, there is a responsibility to represent 4-H and camp positively on social media. You have the option to allow campers to friend or follow you on your social media accounts, but then you must be more aware of your posts and how you represent 4-H. You can also decline friend and following requests from your campers, allowing yourself to post more freely but still be mindful of the code of conduct. It is up to the counselor to choose which is best for them but no matter what, remember you are a counselor for 4-H camp and what you say, post, and do reflects back on camp and 4-H. (In general it is a good idea to post after camp and not before camp starts).

Emergency Action Plans

Emergency action plans are the steps or procedures you follow if there is an emergency. Each camp will have their own emergency action plan. Make sure you cover and understand these early on in your training and if there is no plan, insist that one is provided. Below we are going to highlight some emergencies and some general guidelines to follow should an emergency arise. For more specific instructions and procedures, talk with your 4-H Camp Director and the Camping Facilities Manager.

Basic Protocols for Emergency Procedures

- Remain calm and move immediately away from the danger.
- For medical **emergencies** needing immediate attention, call 911.
- Watch for downed power lines and other hazardous conditions.
- Account for all campers, counselors, and staff.

Active Threat Guidelines

Most of our emergency procedures involve bringing everyone in camp into one place to count heads. In the unlikely event of an armed shooter or other active threats in camp, bringing everyone into one place would actually make things worse. In these instances, a Run Hide Fight® procedure should be initiated. Your camp director and or camp facility manager should provide training on implementing the safety plan specific for your camp location.

Medical emergencies

Refer to Section 4 related to how to handle medical emergencies. These emergencies can potentially be prevented by ensuring appropriate risks are managed.

Weather & Natural Disaster Emergencies

At camp, it is inevitable that weather can and will alter plans. In order to manage risk appropriately, it is pertinent to understand weather emergencies and what to do in the event of an emergency. The following are basic guidelines for each emergency. Your campsite will likely have additional protocols in place.

Types of Weather Emergencies

Tornadoes

- Adult staff monitor the weather situation and notify counselors of any action needed.
- Once notified, campers, counselors, and staff will move to the designated meeting location(s). Make sure to bring flashlights.

Severe Storm (including lightning)

- Remain indoors in designated locations or move to a nearby building.
- Stay away from open doors and windows and unplug electrical appliances.
- Do not use a land-line phone.
- If away from camp, seek cover away from trees, power lines, and metal objects.

Fire

- Evacuate the location immediately. Most camps have a designated meeting place for fires.
- Call 911 and give your name, location, and nature of the emergency. Do not hang up.

Flooding

- Do not walk in flooded areas.
- Notify adult staff of any flooding.

General Water Safety

- Correctly use a personal flotation device (pfd) when suggested for water activities (such as canoeing, kayaking, tubing).
- A counselor or adult should remain on shore to assist with supervision.
- A lifeguard should be present at all water related activities.

Vehicles

- Park all vehicles in the designated area.
- Counselors should not ride or drive camp vehicles without explicit permission from the camp director or camp facility manager.

Missing Camper

- Immediately report missing campers to the camp director or staff.
- Do not leave your group to look for the lost camper.
- The camp director will, when necessary, organize a search.
- Check with friends of the missing camper for helpful information.

Hazing and Initiation

Hazing refers to any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental or physical health, or safety of an individual. This is not acceptable for any individual in the camp setting to engage in due to the negative impacts on people.

Initiation is the action of admitting someone into a group, typically with a ritual. An initiation process is only acceptable if it is conducted in a positive manner. If this process has a negative perception, it is not permitted.

Conflict and Problem Solving

Due to the intimacy of camp life, conflicts are bound to arise. The best method for dealing with conflicts would be one which results not only in a satisfactory solution for both parties, but also in a solution that improves relationships and fosters a positive camp environment. This is known as conflict resolution.

If possible, avoid conflict by creating a welcoming environment, setting appropriate expectations, getting a suitable amount of sleep, and engaging in appropriate conversations.

In order to manage conflict, the ability to express emotions clearly, define problems specifically, listen reflectively, and brainstorm creatively is required. These basic skills are set into a step by step framework for addressing the problem. Conflicts can be resolved if you stay calm and use the following steps. Your role as counselor may also be the role of moderator, especially if you are working with two campers who are having conflict.

1. Identify a safe quiet place.
2. Take a listening ear to the situation.
3. State the problem clearly and calmly (have everyone state the problem using “I” statements).
4. Define the scope of the problem – generate options while still deferring judgement. Identify consequences of each option.
5. Manage roadblocks with calmness, patience and respect.
6. Build an agreement that works.

Child Protection Training

Child abuse is any action that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. There are four main forms of abuse, which are described below and include a definition, examples, possible signs, and what to look for at camp. It is required for camp counselors and staff to receive training annually on this topic, along with how to report any suspected abuse.

Physical Abuse

Definition: Any physical injury or death inflicted other than by accidental means^{2,3,5}

Signs:

- Unexplained burns
- Unexplained bruises on the face, lips, mouth, back, buttocks, and thighs
- Human bites
- Multiple hospital visits
- Seems frightened of parents and does not want to go home

What to look for at camp:

- Talking about a fear of going home
- Anxious about going with a particular staff member
- Physical force used by parents
- Look for unexplained bruises or burns visible in swimwear

Sexual Abuse

Definition: When a person uses power over a child, and directly involves the child in any sexual act, involves the child in pornography, or forces the child to witness sexual acts.^{2,3,5}

Signs:

- Suddenly refuses to participate in physical activities
- Exhibits unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Frequent and unexplained sore throats
- Yeast or urinary infections
- Torn or bloody underclothes
- Aggressively initiates sexual contact with another child

What to look for at camp:

- Campers talking about sexual topics advanced for their age
- Inappropriate sexual touching child-to-child
- Excessively physically affectionate
- Bruises on inner thighs or other “no touch” areas

Emotional Abuse

Definition: A pattern of harmful interactions between two people such as criticizing, belittling, rejecting, or withholding love resulting in impaired psychological growth and development.^{2,3,5}

Signs:

- Eating issues (anorexia, bulimia, etc.)
- Nervous habits (tics, washing hands, biting nails, extreme anxiety)
- Cruel behavior – using physical force or words to hurt another camper, staff member or animal.
- Lack of emotional attachment to parent
- What to look for at camp:

Not eating or overeating at camp meals

- Extreme nervous repetitive habits – nail biting, washing hands
- Very negative about oneself, loner, demeaning
- Excessive name calling, hazing, destructive

Neglect

Definition: failure to provide for a child's basic (i.e., food, shelter, supervision, and clothing), educational or medical needs. Neglect may exist because of the refusal to provide or because the family does not have the financial means to provide for their child.^{2,3,5}

Signs:

- Begs or steals food or money
- Poor hygiene
- Unsuitable clothing
- Chronic hunger
- Low height and weight average
- Large amounts of time unsupervised
- Assuming adult responsibilities (caring for younger siblings, cooking all meals, etc.)

What to look for at camp:

- Stealing food from the dining hall
- Poor shower habits/poor hygiene
- Dirty clothes or clothes with numerous stains and/or tears

What to do if you suspect abuse or neglect

- Listen to the child
 - Restate and validate their feelings if someone shares them
 - Do say: "I can understand you feeling _____."
 - Do not say: "That must have made you feel _____"
- Remain calm and collected
 - Don't downplay, exaggerate, or make promises in response to their story—your response is important to maintaining trust
 - Do say: "Thank you for telling me, I understand this is important"
 - Do not say: "I will fix this" or "That's the worst thing I've ever heard"
- Don't ask leading questions
 - Let the kids tell their own version of their experiences
 - Do say: "What happened?"
 - Don't say: "Did s/he _____ to you"
- Maintain Confidentiality⁴
 - Don't promise the child you won't tell anyone
 - Tell only the Camp Director— unless they direct you otherwise
 - Do say: "I will have to tell (Camp Director) if you or someone else is in danger."
 - Do not say: "You can tell me. I won't tell anyone."
- Immediately Tell the Camp Director⁴
 - Depending on the urgency of the situation, immediately go find the camp director or at your next available opportunity
 - Do: Calmly walk to and have a face-to-face conversation with the camp director

- Do not: Run in a panic, create a dramatic scene, or wait to tell later
- Focus on Remembering Facts⁴
 - You will need to report objective details of everything the child said—leave out subjective details or your opinion
 - Do: state when, where, who else was there when the abuse occurred and when you were told.
 - Do not: state any assumptions or make guesses
- LISTEN, ONLY!⁴
- It is not your job to:⁴
 - Investigate
 - Ask questions
 - Confirm child abuse or not
 - Place judgment
- Stick to the facts! Do not dig deeper⁴

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Section 6: Program Planning/Evaluation

Planning camp takes up the most of a counselor's time before camp starts. It is the counselors' responsibilities to have the activities, programs, skits, sessions/workshops, and more. Counselors should learn constructive ways to plan programs and evaluate them in order to create a positive camp experience. In this chapter we will walk through some steps for planning programs, activities, and events.

Program Examples

Here are some examples of programs that you might be in charge of planning and implementing. You may be in planning groups or committees to plan these programs. However your camp decides to distribute planning programs amongst counselors, it is important to plan each one accordingly.

- Campfire
- Candle lighting
- Dances
- Flag Raising/Lowering
- Games/Recreation
- Icebreakers
- Nature
- Reflections
- Sessions
- Song leading

Planning the Program

Before we get to camp we need to take the time in our trainings and meetings to really plan well for camp.

Step 1: Develop Program Goals and Objectives

When developing programs, the first thing you need to do is think about the "why". Why are you doing that program or activity at camp? Think about the benefit of the program or activity. Is it teaching a life skill, does it create team building, or are they gaining knowledge? At the core of each program should be fun and education and that should be a part of the goals and objectives.

A great model to follow when creating goals for your program is the SMART goals model. The SMART goals is an acronym that stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time Bound.

- Specific- your goals should be clear and detailed and focused and answer what, why, who, and where.
- Measurable – your goals should be able to be tracked and measured and it should be able to help you understand when you’ve reached your goal.
- Achievable – your goals need to be realistic and attainable to be successful. It should still stretch your limits but still be possible.
- Relevant – your goals should matter to you and should relate to what else is going on at camp. Make sure your goals drive everyone and are relevant to as many people as possible.
- Time-bound – every goal needs a target date to complete it by. When is this goal supposed to be completed? How long will it take?

The goals of the program or activity should guide everything else you are doing. It is good practice to refer back to your goals and objectives to see if what you have planned are actually aligning with what you want to accomplish.

Step 2: Identifying Needs and Ideas

Once you’ve identified the goals and objectives of the program and activity then it is best to start identifying the needs of the audience, amount of time to plan for, and space where the event will occur. Then, you will brainstorm the various components for the program and activity.

- When identifying the needs for the program, think about the campers’ ages and stages (referred to in section 3). Does this program better suit younger campers or is it best for 11 to 13 year olds? Is the activity or program appropriate for their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development?
- While thinking about the program, how much time do you need to complete the program or activity? Does it need to be done in an hour? Can the timing be flexible or does it need to end at a specific time?
- Also think about when it is best to do these programs or activities in the day. Is it better to do this activity in the morning, afternoon, or evening? For example, it’s not a good idea to schedule a guest speaker activity right after lunch. Campers might be full from lunch and struggle to pay attention.
- It’s helpful to think about the group size as well. Will this be a large group or is it a small group? If it is a large group, can it be divided into smaller groups? How will all participants be engaged in the activity and not just sitting on the sidelines?

- Space for the program also needs to be considered. How large of area do you have? Is it inside or outside? What are the potential dangers or risk factors to consider regarding the space?
- Is there a particular theme you want to incorporate into your activity? If so, how can you do this effectively?
- You also need to consider the cost and supplies. Do you need tables, chairs, supplies? Who is providing those things, your Camp Director or the camp facility?

Step 3: Content Planning

Once you have thought about your goals and have thought through the general needs and ideas that you and the group have, you can start planning the content and the program. This is where you start to practically create a layout and plan for what exactly you will be teaching/doing in activity or program. Here are some things you can do to make sure you are planning your program/activity well.

- Have a lesson plan for whatever activity you plan to do. A good lesson plan will have:
 1. The **Necessary Materials** you need.
 2. The **Clear Objectives** you have.
 3. The **Background Knowledge** the campers need to know.
 4. The **Direct Instruction** you plan to give the campers.
 5. What you **Plan for the Campers to Do**.
 6. A time for **Reflection or Closure**.
 7. All of this should be in some sort of **Timeline** that includes setup and teardown.
- Make sure whatever program or activity you plan to do will capture the attention of your audience, the campers. The activity or program should keep their attention the whole way through. Make sure the activity is relevant and engaging.
- Make sure your activity or program is inclusive of all the campers. Make sure you have multiple options or opportunities for campers to get involved. Campers may have a physical disability that may stop them from participating. How can you make sure they are included? What about if a camper doesn't wish to be touched, how do they participate? Make sure you are thinking about ways to include everyone and be flexible when actually teaching. Try not to have anyone just sit out.
- Safety is important when planning. Refer to Section 5 for more about planning for safety and risk management.
- The best planners have thought about every possible scenario and option. They do not just plan; they over plan. When you are writing out a lesson planning and thinking about what you are going to do, make sure you take the time to plan.

- Once you have your lesson plan written out and you have finalized what you are going to do, you should practice. Take time with your other counselors and practice what you have planned. If you are making something or doing an activity, try it out or make it before you get to camp. This will give you the opportunity to see what works and what does not. The best instructors and teachers have practiced their lessons ahead of time.

Step 4: Backup Plans

When planning for any activity or program you must plan a backup plan. This should not just be an idea for a backup plan it should be a well thought out backup plan that is laid out and has a lesson plan as well. It is also to have some small activities with little to no supplies so you can fill time gaps or adjust if there is weather or a change of plans. Talk with your Camp Director/4-H Professional about some resources they have such as rope activities, pool noodle activities, or grab bags.

Step 5: Evaluation

The last thing you need to plan is how you are going to evaluate the program or activity. There needs to be some sort of collection and analysis of what you did, what went well, and what did not. This helps us plan better 4-H camps for the future. There are two main types of evaluation, formal and informal.

Formal evaluation is typically collected from some sort of survey or quiz. It more relies on numerical data and typically focuses on skills or clear pictures of learning. The data is then computed and summarized. Often at camp we will give some sort of formal assessment at the end of camp in the form of a survey.

Informal evaluation is typically collected from a discussion or debrief of the activity or program. It's asking your campers what they liked about the activity, what they did not like, what they would change, etc. It is still helpful to record this type of evaluation so the thoughts could be put into similar categories and give us a clear picture of what we need to change for the future. At camp we often do informal evaluation after a session or activity or at the end of each night.

Implementation

Now that you've through all the planning of an activity or program we get to the actual implementation or doing the activity or program. This is once you've gotten to camp and we are now putting on 4-H Camp.

Step 1: Preparation at Camp

Once you get to camp the first thing to do is actually prepare for the activity. Here are some things for you to think about and do once you get to camp.

- Take a minute at some point to find the physical space and location you are planning on having the activity. Is it big enough? Does it work? Do you need to adjust anything?
- Have a conversation with the other counselors who might be helping you. Remind each other who is responsible for what. Does someone need to start setting up ahead of time? Do the supplies need moved? Who's meeting the campers?
- Think through setup and what needs to happen. How much time did you plan? How many people need to help setup? Do you still need to create or put together some supplies now that you're at camp?
- Double check your backup plan. Do you need to move locations? If you have a different location as a backup, will it work?
- Try to take a minute at some point just to practice or at least go over what you planned with everyone involved. There might be some last minute things that need changed or switched out and that's ok.
- If you need to change anything make sure that the other counselors involved are aware of the changes. You should also let your Camp Director or adult staff know what changes you've made so that everyone is on the same page.

It is better to change and come up with a different plan earlier if your original activity isn't going to work. The earlier you can make sure your plans are good, the better. If you are in charge of multiple things at camp, a good rule of thumb is to go over everything the day before and setup either the night before or the morning of your activities.

Step 2: Teaching/Leading

You are at camp and you have done your prepping and last minute changes. Now the activity and program has started. This is where you are actively teaching or leading the program. Refer back to section 2: counselors about different teaching styles and which one works best for you in each situation. Here are some general tips when leading an activity or program.

- When giving instructions make sure you are visible by everyone and can be heard.
- There might be multiple ways to do the activity or program so make sure everyone is aware that they are going to do it the way it is being taught today, even if they know a different version.
- Never assume that everyone knows the activity or game at camp. We must always give instructions and teach the activity or program.
- Make sure to check in for understanding by allowing a time for questions or clarification after you have taught. It is ok if they have questions, it doesn't mean you taught badly.
- When teaching use attention getters to make sure that the attention is on you.

Examples are:

- "If you can hear me clap once." (clap)
- "O-H", "I-O"

- A good teacher also knows when an activity has run its course. Make sure you are paying attention to the group. If the majority of the group is done with the activity, it is better to stop it and try something else than let the activity drag out. Even if it is a short amount of time it is better to end an activity while youth are engaged and excited than when they're tired and done with it. If they end it while excited they are more likely to do it again later. A common phrase used to express this is "kill it before it dies".

Step 3: Debriefing/Evaluation

Once the teaching and the actual activity is over it is time to process or close the activity. This is a combination of the evaluation you planned before and the ability to wrap up an activity so that it doesn't fade out or just end abruptly.

Even if it is a couple of minutes, a good camp counselor will take the time to process and close an activity. There are some specific debriefing materials or resources you can use to close out an activity (check with your Camp Director about what resources you have to debrief or process). Some general things you can do are:

Informally

- Ask questions. Make sure your questions are sequenced. Just like how you warm-up before working out, people's brains need warmed up before asking more difficult questions. Here is a quick model of how to sequence questions:
 1. Ask 'What' questions. These questions refer to what actually happened during the activity. What happened? What did you see? Where did we mess up? How are you feeling?
 2. Ask 'So What' questions. These questions relate back to the goals of the activity or program and add meaning. Do you think you communicated well? Why did this work well? How did you choose a leader?
 3. Ask 'Now What' questions. These questions drive home the lesson's objective and discuss future behavior and goals. How can we communicate better in the future? How do we pick our leaders at school? What could you do differently next time?
- Make sure everyone can see and hear each other when debriefing. You want to encourage discussion and campers learning from each other. This is why most debriefing is done in some sort of circle. Sometimes you might need to repeat back to the group what was said to make sure everyone can hear what was conveyed.
- Try to make sure your response to comments are neutral. If you respond to a camper's input negatively it might discourage them to respond again. On the flipside, if you respond to a camper that their answers are "exactly right" or "great answer" it might discourage others to respond as they do not wish to look dumb in front of their peers. This is not always a hard and fast rule but you should always consider the comments you have about your campers input.
- You might have to try some different ways of debriefing and evaluating before you find what works for you. Just like teaching, everyone has a little different style of how they debrief and close an activity. Keep trying different ways until you find something you are comfortable with.

Formally

- Go back to an activity or program later in the evening and reflect on the whole day. These daily evaluations could be done in the cabin or in groups. It's still having some sort of discussion but make sure that someone is recording what is being said so that your Camp Director may use the insight to change or keep things for the future.
- You may even just record your observations and what you are seeing at camp and let your adult staff and other counselors know at meetings you might have at camp. Try to keep a journal of the observations you have about what worked well at camp and what did not.
- You might also have an end of camp survey that the campers and counselors will fill out. Make sure your campers are being honest and completing the survey so that you can really collect data in how camp can be improved or kept consistent.

Know that as a 4-H camp counselor you will have some sort of responsibility in evaluating camp and your camp counselor trainings. 4-H professionals are always trying to better and improve our camps to make sure they are serving our campers.

Step 4: Teardown

The last thing that needs to be done is tearing everything down. Make sure you have time to tear down and clean the physical space you are in. It's best to leave a space and everything cleaner and better than you found it. In your planning times you should have thought about how you are going to tear down. Is it possible for a counselor or two just to stay a little after and tear down, does a whole group need to stay, or can the campers and everyone pitch in to clean up? Make sure you are thinking about tear down and just don't expect it to happen.

Chapter Closing

One of the biggest roles a Camp Counselor has is being a teacher and leading. Most of our time at camp is spent doing some sort of planned activity or program. The success or failure of camp is often up to the time, creativity, and planning you put in to having interactive and engaging things for campers to do. The more you can plan ahead, the easier the implementation will be.

Section 7: Site/County Specific Information

Each 4-H Camp is unique to the specific population and led by a different Camp Director. It is your responsibility to check with your 4-H professional and Camp Director to ask about these things and see that they are covered in your training.

- Typical timeline of being a counselor
 - Application
 - Interview/selection
 - Trainings/planning
 - Camp
 - Evaluations
- Camp Reunion or Open House after camp
- Camp Scholarships
- Camping Facility
 - Directions to Facility
 - Camping Facility Staff
 - Camping Facility resources
 - Camp Map/Tour
 - Dining hall procedures
 - Camping Facility rules
 - Weather emergencies
 - Camp Contact Information

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Section 8: Appendices

In this sections are some helpful examples and idea starters for you and your 4-H Camp to utilize as you plan for camp.

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Example Lesson Plan (can be found in camping curriculum)

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