

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Training for Camp Counselors

Curriculum Overview

Background: Ohio 4-H Camping Programs use 14-18 year old youth as Camp Counselors in Ohio 4-H day and overnight camping programs. Camp counselors undergo at least 24 hours of camp counselor training, including a minimum of 6 hours on-site. Placing the health and well-being of campers in the hands of teenagers requires extra emphasis on risk management topics during training. Child abuse training related to prevention and reporting is one of the key subjects covered in-depth with camp counselors. Identifying appropriate, interactive, relevant ways to teach this concept is essential to comprehension and operationalization by camp counselors.

Camp is the #1 highest risk activity Ohio 4-H offers. There is endless opportunity for injury to a person, property, and/or reputation to yourself, your program, and to The Ohio State University. It's a gamble Educators will continue to take because they watch counselors and campers grow and learn exponentially right before their very eyes at camp year after year. We aren't going to stop going to camp. Therefore, the challenge becomes assessing our areas of greatest liability and responding by providing quality training to those who are directly and indirectly responsible for handling these matters. This training seeks to provide Ohio 4-H camp counselors with both the content and context for child abuse prevention and reporting at camp.

Target Audience: This curriculum package seeks to be used by county 4-H professionals to provide child abuse training and activities tailored specifically for use with camp counselors. The curriculum was written for teenage learners that have undergone extensive camp counselor training.

Summary of the program goal(s):

1. Provide constitutional and operational definitions of types of abuse
2. Offer examples of what each type of abuse might look like in a camp setting
3. Outline the expectations for reporting in a camp setting
4. Deliver applied-learning opportunities for real-world camp scenarios

Outlines prerequisite content knowledge instructors need:

- Experience working with camp counselors in camp settings
- Experience teaching topics
- Experience facilitating discussion

Scholarly/research-based reference list:

- Ohio State University Child Abuse and Neglect Training
- Kirk Blair- interview
- Hannah Epley- interview
- Old Camp Counselor Child Abuse Training

Suggested Presentation Path:

- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Flyer or Fact Sheet
- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Training Parent Letter
- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Training PowerPoint
- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Training Scenarios
- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Training Jeopardy
- Camp Counselor Child Abuse Evaluation

Author Background:

Katie Feldhues & Erin Daily are county 4-H Educators and Hannah Epley is the Ohio 4-H Camping Specialist with a combined 35 years of experience in camping at over 15 facilities around the nation. They serve on the Ohio State University Extension Camping Design Team, their local Camp Boards, NAE4-HA Camping and Environmental Education Task Force, and serve on the planning committee for Ohio 4-H's Making eXtreme Counselors training workshop. Each leads a combination of junior, senior, teen and Cloverbud camping opportunities for over 600 Ohio 4-H'ers. Camping is not only their livelihood, but their passion. Keeping camping safe and welcoming is a number one priority in all of their camping roles.

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