Health, Wellness, and Risk Management Competency
Ohio 4-H Camp Counselor Core Competencies

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Camp counselors contribute to a quality camping experience and therefore it is important to understand factors that influence their successful performance. Because counselors work directly with campers, they have a great impact on the learning environment. Across the country, 4-H is known for its use of teens as camp counselors. 4-H camp counselors need to know how to perform their multi-faceted role, and the 4-H professionals who train them need to be able to evaluate their competencies. A competency model was developed to support 4-H camp counselor selection, training, and evaluation.

This list of Ohio 4-H Camp Counselor Core Competencies was developed by using a variety of internal and external sources. Ohio 4-H professionals were involved in a mixed-method research design including a review of literature, interviews, modified nominal group technique, focus groups, and a survey. The process included data gathering, analysis, integration, and peer debriefing in four phases: (a) review of literature, document review, and idea generation; (b) new model development; (c) model validation; and (d) final refinement and confirmation.

Core competencies are the demonstrated capacities that form a foundation for high-quality performance in the workplace. For the purpose of this information, this workplace may include campsites or camping programs in Ohio. Definitions are also presented, which is a term and associated description of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and observable behaviors that represent the competency identified. Key actions, or general descriptions of behaviors that illustrate a competency, are given for each competency on subsequent fact sheets in this series.

These competencies are what 4-H camp professionals should focus on when selecting, training, and evaluating camp counselors. For related resources on these and other topics, refer to the Ohio 4-H Camping Curriculum. The additional fourteen competencies and their key actions may be found on subsequent fact sheets in this series.

Competency: Health, Wellness, and Risk Management

Definition: Is watchful and knows what to look for regarding potential health and safety concerns and how to deal with and react to situations; has knowledge of emergency procedures and the protocol to take if they arise; has knowledge of how to manage their own stress, support the physical and emotional well-being of the camp community and basic first aid skills.

Key actions

- Addresses safety issues or threats that may arise by preparing the environment for safe success; keeps camper safety at the forefront of their mind.
- Has an understanding of safety protocols and what to do in an emergency situation; reacts to the situation according to these protocols.
- Recognizes the seriousness of an event, behavior, or action and calmly and appropriately reacts to the situation.
- Knows when to seek help and report violations.
References