

California State University, Long Beach Research Foundation

CAMPS - ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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 someone else. Bullying can also happen through cyberspace: through the use of e-mails, text messaging, and instant messaging. This type of bullying can also lead to persons being hurt during or between the camp seasons and be especially hurtful when persons are targeted with meanness and exclusion.

At our camps, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying. Our philosophy is based on our desire to create an environment that ensures every camper has the opportunity to acquire skills, knowledge, friendships, and positive life experiences. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories.

Unfortunately, persons who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their camp experience. Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously. We provide professional development to our staff so both staff and campers will be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience. Every person has the right to expect to have the best possible experience at camp, and by working together as a team to identify and manage bullying, we can help ensure a positive outcome.

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CAMPS - BULLYING PREVENTION

Camp Staff Members:

BULLYING is any intentional hurtful act, committed by one or more persons against another. Bullying occurs when there is an imbalance of power between a bully and a victim.

The main types of bullying include:

- **Physical** — punching, hitting, shoving, stealing personal things, or getting into someone's personal space when asked not to.
- **Verbal** — name calling, hurtful teasing, taunting, unwanted nicknames, gossiping
- **Relational** — exclusion, humiliation, blackmailing, manipulating friendships

Who are the “**bullies**”? Bullies are often smart, popular, well-liked, and have good social skills. They may look like leaders and be liked by counselors and other campers, but bullies lack empathy. The “**victims**” on the other hand show some vulnerability that makes them easy targets. As a counselor, you need to be aware of those kids that may be left out or have a difficult time fitting in or making friends. Sometimes, a victim of bullying may in turn bully others.

As a **camp staff member**, your role is to be a hero! You need to discuss camper rules and role model the behavior that you ask them to follow. Let campers know that bullying is unacceptable and won't be tolerated. Do not play favorites with some campers since that would show them that it is okay to “**exclude**” others. Bullying usually occurs in places when counselors are not around, so it is important to make bullying a regular topic of discussion with your campers on a weekly basis at a minimum, so they know you take it seriously. Emphasize the importance of valuing each participant and their unique contributions.

When a camp staff member observes bullying of any kind, they must intervene by stepping in and separating the children involved. Inquire with all parties about what happened to determine the facts of the situation. **Support the victim**, Assure the children that you will look into the incident and report any bullying behavior to your leadership team immediately. Teach your campers to be a real “**caring**” community and to let you know when they see someone left out, teased, or upset by someone else. Teach campers the difference between 1) **reporting**: getting kids out of danger and into safety and 2) **tattling**: telling on others with the intent to get someone in trouble. When a camper reports that he or she is being picked on, support him or her and keep an eye on the situation. Find opportunities to pair that camper with a supportive peer and to encourage their participation in group activities.

When you **role model** to your campers that you want them to be heroes themselves and step in to help another camper or find a counselor when there is a bullying problem, you have done a great job! Campers follow your actions much more than they follow your words. Make camp a place where everyone feels valued by how you bring everyone together.

Camp staff members must report all instances of bullying or suspected bullying immediately to their camp director.