



4-H Camp Counselor Training—Walworth County

Keys to a Positive 4-H Camping Experience

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| Goal: | KEY: <i>EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT</i> |
| <p>Counselors will consider this key element and how it relates to the camping experience.</p> <p>Counselors will understand camp rules and emergency procedures, learn about appropriate behavior management techniques, and understand the rule regarding hazing at camp.</p> | BACKGROUND: <p>Camp counselors are key to the success of any 4-H camping program. They serve as role models for campers and provide leadership to camp planning and camp activities. Their impact on the campers is a lasting one, and it's essential that they understand and work to employ the eight essential elements of positive youth development in the camp environment.</p> <p>Campers should not fear physical or emotional harm while participating in the 4-H camping experience, and parents should be assured that their children are safe when entrusted to camp staff and counselors. The physical environment should be safe, and interactions with fellow campers, counselors, and adult staff should be safe, as well. No hazing is permitted at camp, in the spirit of creating an emotionally safe environment for all campers.</p> |
| Life Skills: | WHAT TO DO: |
| <p>Decision Making Problem Solving Concern for Others Leadership</p> | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>Activity 1: Review duties of cabin counselor, introduced at previous session. Note that keeping campers safe was the number one priority when counselors ranked the duties of the cabin counselor. Note, also, that an emotionally safe and healthy environment is one of the keys to a positive camping program. Split into four small groups using a "communications" exercise such as the one described: Ask participants to line up in order from tallest to shortest without talking. Process what made this task difficult or easy. Now ask them to line up in order by birth dates, from January 1 to December 31, without talking. Process. This was harder because it wasn't so visual; participants had to use hand gestures and other non-verbal communications techniques. Ask group to count off by four while in line to form their four small groups. Ask each group to brainstorm rules and procedures for the safety and welfare of campers in one of the following situations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safety on the hill—cabin and night-time rules 2. Safety on the water—canoeing, swimming, and waterfront rules 3. General camp safety—boundaries, daytime and evening activities, dining hall 4. Emergency procedures—tornado, storm, injury, etc. <p>Have groups report back. Discuss. Add rules or procedures as needed to complete lists. (25 min)</p> <p>Activity 2: Positive Behavior Management Session. Remind counselors that when disciplining campers, they must never use physical punishment or deny basic needs. Sometimes, campers will act up. How can we manage their behavior in a positive way? Show "Positive Behavior Management" PowerPoint. Discuss as directed in presentation. Distribute handout. (25 min)</p> <p>Activity 3: Emotional Safety Discussion. What is meant by emotional safety? What are examples of behaviors that might impact a camper's emotional safety (hazing, bullying, put downs by counselors or other campers, etc.)? Discuss hazing. What is it? List camp examples – singing to get back lost property, campfire skits that might embarrass a camper, etc. Introduce Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Program policy regarding</p> |
| Suggested Grade Levels: | |
| <p>9th and 10th graders</p> | |
| Time: | |
| <p>90 minutes</p> | |
| Supplies needed: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easel paper, markers - Handouts - Pencils - Situation cards | |
| Do Ahead: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare copies of handouts - Review PowerPoint | |

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| | <p>hazing: <i>"Participants shall refrain from participating in initiation ceremonies, hazing, harassment, and other behaviors that involve humiliating or embarrassing another person."</i> So, is having fun at another's expense ever OK at camp? Yes, but use caution. <i>Never</i> have campers be the butt of a skit or joke at camp. Instead, ask a fellow counselor or adult staff member's permission, and feature these counselors or staff, instead. Note that the behavior agreement that the counselors will sign prior to coming to camp includes this policy statement. Distribute behavior agreement for review. (20 min)</p> <p>Activity 4: Physical and Emotional Safety Situations: This activity provides counselors with the opportunity to apply what they've learned in the previous activities. Distribute "situation cards," one per small group. Allow time for group members to discuss options and select best solution to the situation. Ask each group to report back, reading their situation and reporting on their solution. Discuss. (15 min)</p> <p>Wrap Up: Remind youth to sign up for interviews, discuss interview process; etc. (5 min)</p> |
| <p>Prepared by:</p> | <p>TALK IT OVER:</p> |
| <p>Carolyn L. Belczyk, 4-H Youth Development Educator, Walworth Co UW-Extension carolyn.belczyk@ces.uwex.edu</p> | <p><i>Reflect:</i></p> <p>See processing information included with activities. Challenge counselors to think about both the emotional and physical safety of campers and to make both a priority throughout the camp session.</p> <p><i>Apply:</i></p> <p>How will what we've learned about emotional and physical safety help you prepare for your role as a cabin counselor at camp?</p> |