



Our Camp and Retreat Ministries values and depend upon the gifts, commitment, sacrifice, and ministry of volunteers like you. The leadership of volunteers from local churches helps to connect the disciple-making ministries of camps and retreats with the local congregation. Through camps, children and youth connect with unrelated adults who may serve as mentors in their spiritual formation. We thank all our volunteers for your ministry!

This Manual is a re-design of older “Dean’s Manuals” that expressed the policies, procedures, and expectations of those volunteering to staff our Camps and Retreats. We hope this will help you in your experience as a volunteer.

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Section 1: Our Core Values

Toward our mission of *providing immersive experiences that nurture Christian faith*, we have identified the following as the core values that guide our behavior and programming. In the context of the short-term, immersive Christian community that is a camp or retreat, we expect the following behaviors from all our staff:

- 1. We are accepting** (What these behaviors say to campers: “You *belong* here!”)

 - We practice radical acceptance. We accept one another for who we are, without exception. We do not judge or exclude any participant based on race, ethnicity, gender (or gender identity), sexual orientation, or religious background.
 - We are inclusive. We value bringing together people with different theological or ideological perspectives. We welcome all, regardless of their church affiliation.
 - We work to develop a culture of radical hospitality at our event(s). We help participants to feel welcome and to extend that same welcome to others.
 - We create a distinctly Christian community. Camping allows building and living in a Christian community characterized by acceptance, love, and grace.
 - We believe in being connectional. It is important to us to help individuals and local ministries connect with others, including with others in their local churches and communities.

- 2. We are loving** (What these behaviors say to campers: “You *matter* here!”)

 - We love one another as fellow children of God and serve one another by sharing our God-given strengths for the good of the group.
 - We ensure the safety of all. We provide training to our staff, and oversight of events, to ensure that our camps, retreats, and other programs are physically and emotionally safe for all participants.
 - We model Christian service, working to inspire participants toward positive transformation of the world.
 - We pursue a Christ-like attitude, seeking to model the grace and love that are made known to us in Jesus Christ.

- 3. Camp is experiential** (What these behaviors say to campers: “You can *grow* here!”)

 - Camp opportunities include fun games and activities that appeal to participants.
 - Camp activities challenge us to put our faith to practice, and lead us to reflect upon our experiences.
 - Camp programs nurture a feeling of connectedness to God, particularly through our experiences outdoors in God’s Creation.

- Camp experiences are intentionally immersive, inviting us to live in a new community distinctive from our usual day-to-day settings that helps us more directly connect with others and with God.
- Camp experiences are designed to be progressive, providing new, age-appropriate challenges to campers as they return.
- Camp programs are spiritually formative experiences rooted in Christian faith and practice.
- Camp opportunities nurture in-depth leadership development, providing unique opportunities for youth and adults to learn and grow in leadership skill.

Section 2: Our Ministry Emphases

Toward our mission of *providing immersive experiences that nurture Christian faith*, we have established the following as the primary emphases for our ministry programs:

1. Community: We work together to create Christian community, where all feel loved and safe.

- Campers will live in cabin groups as part of the camp community, and may make decisions together.
- Campers will participate in family-style meals where good manners will be encouraged.
- Campers will participate in getting-to-know-you games during the first 24 hours of camp.
- Campers will be encouraged, and given opportunity, to demonstrate kindness toward others.
- Staff will guide and protect campers in all that they do, striving to be good examples.

2. Creation Care: We work together to help all grow in their appreciation of God's Creation and encourage them to be active in its care.

- Campers will participate in activities outdoors and/or focus upon some aspect of nature each day at camp.
- Campers will participate in at least one worship experience outdoors during camp.
- Campers will learn about the importance of taking care of their camp and be empowered to help.
- Campers will be encouraged to perform a service project at camp to help the environment.
- Staff will work to help campers understand their role in Creation Care in camp and beyond.

3. Growth: Grounded in our Christian faith, we work together to nurture participants' growth in self-esteem, discipleship, and leadership.

Self-Esteem:

We work together to nurture campers' self-esteem, encouraging each camper to try something new and helping them to feel comfortable with who God created them to be.

- Campers are given the opportunity to select an activity to participate in.
- Campers will participate in at least one activity designed to promote self-esteem.
- Campers will be presented with opportunities that may challenge them spiritually, physically, creatively, and/or socially (as successfully facing challenges builds self-esteem).
- Campers will try something new while at camp.
- Staff will actively encourage campers to try new things while at camp.
- Staff will use positive messages to build up and encourage campers throughout camp.

Discipleship:

We work together to nurture Christian discipleship, engaging campers in practices of faith that can last a lifetime.

- All participants will be encouraged to consider their relationship with God on an age appropriate level.
- Campers will take part in using a Bible each day. (Campers may be given a Bible if they do not have one.)
- Campers will take part in age-appropriate experiences of prayer, service, and worship while at camp.
- Staff will demonstrate aspects of discipleship, including leading prayer and Bible discussions.

Leadership:

We work together to grow leaders, helping all who participate in our programs to build their confidence and develop leadership skills.

- Campers will be given opportunity to pray out loud.
- Campers will be given an opportunity to help plan and lead at least one activity.
- Staff will demonstrate Christian leadership, including the opportunity to lead an activity during camp.

While some camp or retreat experiences may prioritize specific emphases and/or measurable outcomes over others, leaders are encouraged to keep all in mind as they plan and lead camp or retreat sessions. Leaders are further encouraged to create evaluative tools for their event(s) that measure outcomes identified above.

Section 3: Volunteer Staff, General Policies (Applicable to All Roles)

1. **Age Requirement:**

Conference policy states that all leaders at a conference-sponsored event must be at least four years older than the oldest registered participant at the event. (This rule also includes and applies to Cabin Assistants [section 4], who are considered campers, not staff.) Other specific age requirements may also apply to specific staff roles.
2. **Volunteer Application and Background Check:**

All volunteer staff are required to complete a volunteer application and approval for background check. All information will be kept confidential.

 - Applications must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the event. Variances must be approved with the DSC Director of CRM.
3. **Training:**

All volunteers at conference camps must take part in training, with specific emphasis on the Conference “Safe Sanctuaries Policy” and any site-specific safety training. Camp Deans help to ensure their staff receive training.
4. **Staff Fee(s):**

With the exception of Cabin Assistants, who are campers (section 4), volunteer staff do not pay a Camper Registration Fee. (Cabin Assistants pay ½ of the lowest tier fee of their week at camp.)
5. **Safe Sanctuaries Policy:**

All volunteer staff are required to participate in training regarding, be knowledgeable about, and follow the Conference “Safe Sanctuaries Policy” for the safety of children.
6. **Universal Blood Precautions:**

All volunteer staff on site will need to be aware of and follow Universal Blood Precaution procedures as outlined in the Camp Health Policy. The Camp Nurse is to provide training and supplies the first day of camp.
7. **Cell Phones, Social Media, and Communications**

All volunteer staff are asked to have cell phones on their persons during camp, particularly for emergencies, but they should not be utilized during camp activities or around campers except for necessary communications with other staff members. Phone numbers of Camp staff and CAs are never to be shared with campers, nor posted publically where campers can see them. Any use of online communications media should be done in concert with both the Safe Sanctuaries and social media policies that follow. We must demonstrate caution with social media during, or in relation to, our service at camp. Our Site and Camp Directors will periodically review our policies in light of current events and general standards and communicate our current policy with Camp Deans.

Section 4 – Camp Staff Role Descriptions

Counselors (aka “Cabin Leaders”)

The “Camp Counselor” is the proverbial summer camp staff person; the one person campers remember the most! Recent research shows that a camper’s experience with their counselor is the primary factor in determining a positive outcome of their camp experience. Counselors are recruited and trained by Camp Deans to be the principal adult role model a camper connects with during their week at camp. Counselors may lead or help lead a variety of activities during the day, and are primarily responsible for the safety of the children/youth in their care.

1. **Age:** Counselors must be at least 21 years of age at the time of camp.
2. **Ministry Responsibilities:**
 - a. The Counselor shares and/or leads camp experiences with their cabin group, as developed in the camp curriculum and/or by the Camp Dean. These may include but are not limited to:
 - 1) Ensuring the campers arrive at activities and events;
 - 2) Leading some activities or events (with guidance provided by the curriculum and/or Camp Dean)
 - 3) Leading Bible study or an evening devotional
 - 4) Sharing about their faith in Christ or understanding of the Bible in an age-appropriate manner
 - 5) Leading hikes around the camp site
 - 6) Sharing meals with campers
 - b. Counselors are expected to spend the night with their cabin group.
 - c. Counselors accept the responsibility of a “duty of care,” and should provide reasonable care for the safety of the children/youth at the camp.

Counselors-In-Training

Counselors-In-Training are young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 who take on the same role as a Counselor, but with the support and supervision of the Camp Dean. Their role is the same as that of a Counselor, but with additional reflection suggested.

1. **Age:** A Counselor-In-Training (CIT) must be at least 18 years of age and may serve as staff only on Elementary or Junior High camp staff(s).
2. **Training and Reflection:** In addition to attending staff training as provided by the Camp Dean and/or Site Director:
 - a. A Counselor-In-Training and Camp Dean should meet daily, for at least 15 minutes, to discuss/evaluate the CIT's ministry and leadership.
 - b. A Counselor-In-Training may be asked to complete training in leadership skills as provided by the dean and/or Camp and Retreat Ministries.
3. **Limitations:** A Counselor-In-Training will be paired with a family group partner who has had no less than one full week of camp leadership experience with the appropriate age group.
4. **Suggested Experience:** It is suggested that a Counselor-In-Training have been a Cabin Assistant (at Elementary Camp[s]) prior to serving as a CIT.

Cabin Assistants

A Cabin Assistant is an older, high-school aged camper (at least age 16) invited to serve in a role of leadership during a week of camp for younger children/youth. The intent of the Cabin Assistant program is to help develop ministry and leadership skills in youth. They may be called upon to assist Counselors, Deans, or other program staff in providing activities and guidance to younger children.

1. **Age:** Cabin Assistants must be at least 16 years of age at the time of camp.
2. **Camp Fee:** Cabin Assistants are campers and pay ½ the lowest tier rate of the camp they staff. We encourage Camp Deans to ask local churches to help cover this cost.
3. **Ministry Responsibilities:**
 - a. Cabin Assistants are campers who are given responsibility to help fashion and lead a camp experience in partnership with Camp Counselors. Their experience should be one of both service and learning.
 - b. During their week at camp, Cabin Assistants should engage in reflection on their experience of leadership, facilitated by a Dean, Counselor, or another program leader.
 - c. It is expected the tasks asked of Cabin Assistants be appropriate to their age and level of maturity, and may include (but not be limited to) the same activities Counselors lead (see Section 2 above).
 - d. Cabin Assistants should spend the night with the campers they are assigned to, with adult (18+) supervision also present.

Program Staff

Camp staffs may include program staff who provide leadership and guidance specific to certain types of activity or program elements. Program staff may or may not provide direct leadership to a cabin group.

1. **Specialized Ministry:** Program Staff provide leadership in specialized areas such as music, arts, crafts, nature study, hiking, recreation, etc.
2. **Cabin Responsibilities:** On site Program Staff may or may not have Counselor/Cabin Leader responsibilities, but they *are* considered in the leader-to-camper ratio.
3. **Program Budget and Expenses:** Program Staff may work with the Camp Dean and Site Director regarding expenses for the program, provided they are kept within the set program budget.

Camp Nurse

All Conference on-site camps must have a licensed physician or registered nurse on-site during the camp. The Camp Health Personnel shall be experienced in the administration of medications as needed in the camping situation. The second or third Health Care person may be an EMT or LPN. The Camp Site Director may not allow any conference camp to open without a licensed physician or registered nurse on site.

1. **Camp Nurse Application:** All Camp Health Personnel must complete a *Camp Nurse Staff Application*, which includes their license information.
2. **Camp Health Policy:** In advance of camp, Camp Nurses will be provided a copy of the Camp Health Policy and are asked to be familiar with it in advance of arriving at camp. The policy includes the following regarding health forms:
 - All registered campers must have completed a Health Consent for Medical Treatment signed by a parent. These forms are a part of the registration process.
 - All Camp Program Personnel are to complete a health form and return to the DSC Camp office at least 2 weeks in advance of the start of camp.
3. **Health Personnel to camper ratios should be approximately as follows:**
Elementary Camps: 1 Nurse per 40-50 children; 2 Nurses for more than 50 children.
Junior High Camps: 1 Nurse per 50-60 youth; 2 Nurses for more than 60 youth.
Senior High Camps: 1 Nurse per 70-80 youth; 2 Nurses for more than 80 youth.

1 nurse + 1 Nurse as a Cabin Leader may be appropriate for lower numbers of campers. 2 Nurses on duty in the Nurse's quarters should be present for higher numbers of campers.

Section 5 - Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines for Conference-Sponsored Meetings and Events

Note: What follows is the official Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines adopted by the Desert Southwest Conference's leadership, the "Covenant Council," in March, 2008. These guidelines may be insufficient to our Camp and Retreat events, and thus *additional* procedures may be put in place by staff and leadership beyond those that are described here.

As Christians and United Methodists, we are concerned for the care and well-being of the children and youth in our care. We sponsor summer camps, weekend retreats, and youth events for the children and youth in our Conference. We also invite youth to join us in planning and visioning for the important ministries of the Church. It is critical that we model best practices for the care and protection of these children and youth in our meetings and events. In order to do so, we will operate with the following guidelines for their health and safety while participating in programs and meetings of the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The goal of these guidelines is threefold: first, to prevent abuse from happening to the children and youth in our care; second, to prevent false allegations of abuse against individuals and the church; third, to enable staff and volunteers to recognize and report suspected abuse. There is no one thing that we can do to prevent the abuse of the children and youth in our care. A multi-pronged approach that includes annual training and continual practice will provide the best results.

1. Group of Three Rule

A child or youth should not be alone with another unrelated adult or child or youth at any time for any reason. Everything should be done in groups of at least three: at least two adults and a young person, or two young people and an adult. The ideal to strive for is that at least two unrelated adults to be with children or youth at all times.

Rationale: Should an adult desire to do harm to a child, it is much more difficult to do so with another witness present. The purpose of a second unrelated adult is to provide a second adult who is not in a position to be intimidated by the first.

A secondary rationale for the Group of Three Rule is to prevent false allegations of abuse. A child or youth seeking revenge for discipline, or perhaps simply seeking attention could accuse an adult or another participant of abuse. With no witness, it is one person's word against another's.

Implications: Counseling situations should be managed in a manner that provides privacy of conversation but, if at all possible, visual contact with others. An office with a window into other populated office areas is one option; sitting in an outside area at the edge of a field or building where you may be seen but not heard is another option. At the very least, a door should be left ajar where a yell or struggle could be heard by others. The wise leader will ask another person to stay in visual range to ensure the safety of all involved. Churches should take these issues into account when planning new buildings.

At camps or youth events, when restroom buildings are separate from cabins, plans should be made for two persons to accompany any trips to the restrooms. Having separate shower times for youth and adults is advisable, with an adult available outside the restroom door to hear any disturbance. Camp and event nurses are in vulnerable positions when a participant needs to remain at the nurse's station. They should strategize with other volunteers to have a second person nearby when individual campers are in the nurse's station. Volunteers and staff need to be alert to their situation at all times so that they're not inadvertently left alone with a participant. Child on child abuse is also possible, so again, participants should be in groups of at least three at all times.

Youth leaders, teachers and clergy should be careful not to be in a vehicle alone with a youth. Any volunteers transporting youth should arrange their trips so that the first they pick up and the last they drop off are two youth rather than one. At meetings, plans should be made to prevent one youth from being alone with an adult as parents are picking up or dropping off youth. If it is impossible for a second adult to be present, perhaps another youth and their ride can wait until the last arrives. If this is not possible, the adult should invite the youth to wait with them outside the building where they are at least visible to the public.

2. Background Checks

Annual background checks should be performed on all staff and volunteers that have contact with children and youth at Conference Sponsored Meetings and Events.

An unrelated Conference Staff Person should perform the background check on the person who performs the bulk of the checks. The minimum check is of the National Sex Offender Database, available at www.nsopr.gov . Driver's

license checks should be made of adults transporting children and youth on behalf of the Conference; this excludes parents driving their own children and youth to and from meetings or events. Staff and volunteers may be asked not to drive or volunteer with children's and youth events if undesirable results appear on these checks. National Criminal File checks should be performed annually on paid staffs, who work with children and youth. These checks may be performed at www.screennow.com, through their affiliation with Church Mutual. Background check forms will be made available on the Conference website and will be mailed to all adult volunteers prior to meetings and events.

Rationale: Someone who has been convicted of a sexual offense against children, youth or adults has no place as a volunteer at church events. Further, we desire to not place our children and youth at undue risk by placing them in a vehicle with a driver with recent serious violations on their record. The very act of being asked for a background check may deter a potential abuser from volunteering, or from acting on their desires. Finally, we need to know that the staff that work with our children day in and day out are without a recent criminal background.

Implications: Additional staff time will be required to run checks on all volunteers and to maintain those records. A system will need to be set up to ensure that checks are performed annually and that problems are reviewed and resolved quickly.

Anyone convicted of child or sexual abuse will be denied the opportunity to work with our children and youth.

DUI's or other serious violations happening within the last decade would be cause to restrict someone from driving children and youth. Likewise, a pattern of multiple continued smaller violations would also be cause for restriction. Lesser issues will be at the discretion of the person performing the checks, in consultation with their superior. The seriousness of these issues could be a consideration in denying a person the opportunity to volunteer.

Privacy of information will need to be at the forefront of those performing the checks. Records should be kept in a secure location, and the person performing the checks will need to protect the confidentiality of those being checked.

3. Appropriate Age Difference Between Leaders and Participants

Leaders of children and youth (teachers, camp counselors, youth workers) should be at least four years older than the oldest participant at the camp/event.

Rationale: Leaders whose age is within four years of the participants may not exercise appropriate boundaries in their relationships with those in their care. They may not have developed the level of judgment needed to be placed in responsible situations with children and youth. Finally, they may not command the respect of those they are entrusted to supervise.

Implications: Conference leadership should work to provide younger volunteers the opportunity to volunteer in situations where this age difference can be maintained.

4. Appropriate Age Range Among Participants

Events should not be planned that include only youth and young adults as participants.

Rationale: While little developmental difference may be observed between a 17 year old and a 19 year old, there is in the United States a vast legal difference. An adult in an intimate relationship with a minor could be charged with child abuse or rape. There is a further discomfort in U.S. culture with high school youth building relationships with legal adults, even college students.

Implications: Recent high school graduates may desire to continue "reliving" their high school youth or camp experiences. The church may be called to help some of these young adults move on to new areas of involvement.

Young adult event participants—some of whom may be out of school and in professional positions—should not be expected to abide by the same rules and curfews as youth participants. It behooves us to honor these young adults by treating them as such. Avoiding events that create these situations will be to everyone's benefit.

Some meetings and events attended by youth such as Annual Conference will be multi-generational and among unscreened adults. Flexibility and intentionality will be required to enable the youth to participate fully in these events while maintaining safe boundaries for their time at the event.

5. Appropriate Written and Electronic Communication Between Youth and Adults

Written and electronic communications between adults and children and youth should be as open and public

as possible. Persons wishing to post information on the internet may do so only with permission of the sponsoring organization.

Rationale: Private conversation between a youth and adult, whether written, texted, emailed, phoned, or otherwise sent could signify or be construed as an inappropriate relationship between the adult and the young person. Staff and volunteers may take appropriate photographs and movies of children and youth, but do not have legal authority to post those on-line. Finally, web-pages, blogs, social networking sites, etc about the camp or event that are not maintained by the sponsoring organization are beyond the Church's control and could confer false information.

Implications: Adults needing to communicate by phone with children or youth about a meeting or similar issue should try to talk to the parents or guardians either at the beginning or end of the phone call; likewise, they should copy electronic communications such as e-mails to the parents. A good strategy is to include several issues in a single message, and copy both youth and adults on the message. Adults should avoid private communication with individual children and youth where they can't be observed by others (see counseling suggestions in group of three rule).

Conference permission forms request permission to use photos of the participants in printed and electronic materials. This does not confer permission to individuals to post pictures on their own websites, MySpace pages, etc.

Persons that set up pages about camps or events, while usually well meaning, have posted information that is beyond the control of the sponsoring organization. These postings may or may not represent the organization in the best light. Participants, volunteers and staff should covenant to not post information about the camp or event on-line without the express permission of the sponsoring organization.

Volunteers and staff should be aware of what their own "web presence" is. Were an on-line search for their name done by a child or youth, would anything—photo or written word--come up that they would be embarrassed to have a young person see? Are there links from pages they operate that lead to material that is inappropriate for children and youth? Again, we can ask volunteers and staff to covenant to maintain an appropriate web presence.

6. Reporting Suspected or Known Child Abuse or Neglect

We are both morally and legally responsible to report actions that surround suspected or known child abuse. When we suspect that a child or youth in our care has been subjected to abuse or neglect in their home, we should notify Children's Services.

When it is alleged that a child or youth in our care has been subjected to abuse by someone in the church or Conference event setting, three contacts should be made immediately. The first is local law enforcement authorities; the second is the Superintendent of the district that the incident occurred in; and the third is the Conference Communications Director, who will activate the Conference Crisis Communications Team. In Arizona, report suspected abuse 24 hours a day at 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445). In Nevada, report suspected abuse 24 hours a day at 1-702-399-0081.

Rationale: Our fundamental goal is the protection and well being of the children and youth in our care. Abuse or neglect cannot remain a secret, nor can it be tolerated—if it is, then we are helping to perpetuate it in this and possibly other children or youth. We are not to be concerned about "our getting someone else in trouble". We are not responsible for the actions of others outside of our realm of supervision. We are however responsible both morally and legally to promptly report actions that surround suspected child abuse.

Implications: Staff and volunteers will need to be trained and resourced in recognizing and reporting signs of suspected child abuse and neglect. Health and registration forms used at camps and other Conference events will provide helpful information to state agencies or law enforcement. Once reported, trained professionals from state agencies or law enforcement will conduct interviews to determine if abuse actually has or has not occurred, and will determine further steps to be taken.

A person making a good-faith report cannot be sued for doing so, and their identity will be kept confidential by those receiving the report. Likewise, we will need a system of recordkeeping and covenants to maintain confidentiality of all parties involved.

If abuse has occurred while a child or youth is in our care, providing the Superintendent and Director of Communications with notification—along with local law enforcement authorities--will ensure appropriate communications among church officials and between church officials and media representatives.

Section 6 – Discipline Policy

The following policy is to guide the discipline of particularly disruptive camp attendees. In the event of any disciplinary problems or actions, see your Site Director for the appropriate form to log the incident(s).

As a part of registering for a camp, campers' parents/guardians are required to read and sign the following release:

I, the undersigned parent/guardian, give permission for my child to participate in the indicated camp. I understand that as a Christian camp there are basic expectations of respectful behavior, and if my child is overly disruptive s/he may be given a warning about such behavior. If disruptive behavior persists, the camp staff will first consult with me over the telephone and may later require me to remove my child.

The following are the basic behaviors asked of participants:

- *He/She will involve him/herself with camp activities offered.*
- *He/She will be responsible to the adult leadership of the camp for the duration of the camp.*
- *He/She will dress and behave as a Christian person.*

Possession or use of any tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs (excepting for prescribed medical purposes) are grounds for immediate removal

Below are the three steps to be taken if an individual's behavior is identified by camp leadership to be disruptive of the camp experience.

*By "disruptive," we mean particularly egregious and **repeated** behaviors such as:*

- *disrespect of, or non-cooperation with, staff and/or those in supervision*
- *violation of established rules*
- *disruption of program activities or discussion (whether by speech, action, or even inappropriate inaction)*
- *rude, cruel, or otherwise offensive language*
- *sexually explicit speech or activity*

Note that any behaviors that endanger others or violate specific camp prohibitions (e.g. alcohol, weapons) may require an immediate contact of the parent/guardian to return the camper home as soon as possible. In such situations, the guidelines of #3 below shall be followed.

1. Warning to and conversation with the camper that the current disruptive behavior needs to cease. Conversation should include potential alternatives for such behavior(s), and identify the next step if such behavior continues. Often times a first offense can be easily handled with redirection and later reflection on how a behavior was inappropriate. Note that these conversations might best be had separate from other campers.
2. If the same, or similar, behavior continues, the Dean and camper call home to discuss the situation with a parent/guardian, identifying the behavior that is disruptive. The camper should be present for, and involved in, this conversation.

Some Suggestions for such a conversation:

- Identify the behavior and discuss why it is inappropriate
 - Talk about alternatives
 - Be specific with both camper and parent/guardian about the potential consequence, as listed in #3 below, for further incidents
3. If the same, or similar, behavior persists after the first call home, the dean will contact the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian is responsible to pick up child in a timely manner. While awaiting transportation home, the camper will be separated from the rest of the camp in a supervised setting (e.g. isolation in the nurse's cabin), while within the guidelines of Safe Sanctuaries Policy.

If this step is taken, the following considerations should be shared with camper and parent/guardian:

- a. In most cases, the consequence of a removal is just for this experience. Campers are welcome to return the following year, provided their willingness to behave appropriately.
- b. A camper removed from camp for reasons of behavior is not eligible for any refund.

For more suggestions on behavior and discipline,
please see (and/or download from <http://www.dsccamps.org/volunteer-resources>)
the additional Behavior and Discipline Guidelines from the American Camping Association.

Section 7 – Social Media / Online Presence Policy and Guidelines

Policy

In general, the Conference Camping and Retreat Ministry (CRM) takes a positive view of social networking sites (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snap, etc.) as well as personal websites and weblogs, and respects the right of our staff (paid and volunteer) to use them as a medium of self-expression. We do encourage all staff to consider how your online presence might be perceived by others; what does your social media use say about you and, by extension, our camp ministry?

If any staff choose to identify themselves as staff for one of our camp programs on such Internet venues, some readers of such websites or blogs may view the staff/campers as representatives or spokespersons of the ministry and/or its camps. In light of that responsibility, our program requires, as a condition of serving on staff at camp, that staff observe the following guidelines.

When referring to the camp, and/or its sponsors, programs, activities, campers, volunteers, staff, or other leaders in a blog, website, or other social network venue...

1. Staff should be respectful in all communications and avoid using obscenities, profanity, or vulgar language.
2. Staff should not disparage the camp, campers or other staff or volunteers.
3. Staff must not use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully, intimidate other staff or campers. Behaviors that constitute harassment or bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another staff member, volunteer, or camper.
4. Staff are asked not to request to “friend” any minor participant; and only accept “friend” requests. If receiving a friend request from a minor, we request that individual’s parent(s) also be friended.
5. Regardless of the staff person’s age, when communicating with campers via social media, staff are expected to remember and follow the standards set in the Conference’s Safe Sanctuary policy, “Appropriate Written and Electronic Communication Between Youth and Adults.” Keep all such communication as open and public as possible, and do not use any means of direct messaging that are not public.
6. If Staff post photos on social network sites, we encourage you to tag the camp site or ministry. However, we discourage any staff from tagging any photo with information identifying individuals, and minors may never be tagged. **Note:** during registration parents may opt out of allowing any photos of their children, and in such cases Staff may not post photos of those campers. All photos must be appropriate and within the spirit of the mission of our ministry.

Any staff, volunteer, or campers found to be in violation of any portion of these procedures will be subject to dismissal or denial of future involvement in the camping ministry program.

3 Simple Rules for Social Media

Social Media Guidelines for Methodist Ministries

The “three simple rules” from the heritage of our Methodist movement provide us a framework by which we seek to approach our use of social media¹:

Social media provides the opportunity to share views, thoughts, joys, and concerns about all areas of life. It presents us a new means of gathering people together in community for conversation. Social media posts can thus be effective tools for ministry if we are careful to apply caution in their use. Therefore, we seek to

Do No Harm

...by avoiding insulting language or damaging the reputation of others.

...by carefully evaluating the truthful basis for information before we choose to share.

...by using discernment, recognizing that once we hit “send” on a message or post a statement what we have created becomes public and may never be removed.

To Think About:

- Is my post “doing harm” to the reputation of the church, Christ, or another person or organization?
- Can this post be interpreted as harmful, offensive, rude, or distasteful?
- Am I using this means as an outlet to vent, or is there a more productive, less public way to do so?

Social media is one of the most effective methods for networking and communicating. When used properly, it can have a significant encouraging influence on readers and become a powerful tool for delivering the Gospel, sharing news, and obtaining feedback/ideas for the benefit of our ministries with others. Therefore, we seek to

Do Good

...by choosing to make posts that are respectful in language and tone, and in good taste.

...by seeking to share posts with the intention to encourage and inspire others.

...by demonstrating with our posts the qualities we aspire to, including (but not limited to) humility, patience, love, grace.

To Think About:

- Can this post be described as “good”?
- Will this post help the Kingdom and fellow believers? How will it be perceived by non-believers? How might this post be received by people of different cultural or faith backgrounds?
- Are we communicating effectively by asking questions in addition to providing information?

Social media is a great way to find meaningful and inspiring devotionals, blogs, videos, and resources that nurture our spirit and help us grow in our faith. And social media is an effective way to share such resources with others, inviting them to grow in faith.

Therefore, we seek to

Stay in Love With God

...by ensuring our use of social media does not occupy so much of our time that we are no longer participating in meaningful Bible study, devotional times, worship, and conversations with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

...by using social media as a tool to aid, promote, and conduct discussions, studies, and devotional times with others.

...by seeking and sharing meaningful areas of social media that inspire one’s heart toward continued reflection on God.

To Think About:

- How can social media help me stay in love with God? Might it be hindering me?
- How am I helping others to stay in love with God by my social media contributions?

¹ “3 Simple Rules for Social Media” originally developed by the Indiana Conference of The U.M. Church. Adapted with permission.