

**Guidelines for Preventing Child Sexual and Physical Abuse.**  
**Based on recommendations from Church Mutual.**

This world is not perfect. Bad things happen. Because of the reality of child abuse these days, it is important for us as staff to not only protect our campers from any situation that could be construed as abusive, but also to protect yourself from being in a position to be accused of improper sexual contact. Because of the background of some of the campers we serve, it is a likely possibility that you might be accused of sexual abuse at some time. It is best to avoid situations where sexual abuse is most likely to occur, and situations that could easily lead to allegations (whether accurate or false). For this reason, the Board of Directors have come up with the following guidelines to protect you the staff as well as our campers from even a hint of sexual or physical abuse. These guidelines apply to ALL staff and adults at camp and are to be taken very seriously. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in the staff member being sent home and not asked back.

1. Each Director is to designate a “confidential counselor” to whom any camper or other child can go at any time without special permission to discuss any problems he or she may be having. This would normally be one of the Directors and/or the Nurse.
2. The board shall establish a policy of conducting a fair and discreet investigation of all alleged incidents of sexual abuse. ALL allegations will be investigated. Suspected abusers will be asked to leave.
3. The staff should limit their physical contact with children. Such contacts that should be limited are excessive horseplay, rubbing backs and for kids above junior camp age, holding hands or allowing kids to sit on laps. Hugs and other signs of encouragements should be use as long as it does not make the camper uncomfortable. Any contact that could be misunderstood, especially between opposite sexes must be avoided.
4. There is to be no hazing of physical punishments of any kind. If a camper has become a danger to him or herself or others, it is ok to physically restrain the camper in the least restrictive manner possible. Any type of hazing will be dealt with harshly.
5. All activities are to be done in an open area or room, and not in private. If you must talk to a camper privately, move away from the crowd but in sight of other campers and adults. If more privacy is required, two unrelated adults must be with the camper, and if the camper is female, one adult must be also female, normally that camper’s counselor or the camp nurse.

6. More than one adult must accompany a camper on field trips or any activity. Two adults, a director or appointed person and a counselor or other appointed person must accompany a camper for a trip to the emergency room.

7. Staff should periodically inspect cabins, offices, work areas, and other areas where children and adults are together. Also, check the bathhouse, closets, and other areas where sexual abuse might occur. Counselors must be aware of where their campers are at all times.

8. Adults should not spend considerable "off duty" time with the same child or children. Make sure that such time is spent in the open area. If you need to have some private time with a camper, inform the Director of the general nature and place of discussion. It is best to NOT be alone with a camper at any time. If possible, either have another adult with you, have a group discussion with several campers or conduct the discussion out in the public, away from people but in view of everyone. Not following this guideline may result in action by the Director. If necessary, the Director will discuss what happened with the camper.

YOU are a reporting staff member. If you even suspect that any abuse has taken place either at camp or before coming to camp, you are required to report it. The proper procedure for reporting any abuse is to discuss your concerns with the nurse and/or Director. They may then discuss this with the camper or contact the proper authorities for follow up. Under no circumstance should you discuss any of this with anyone else in the camp. The camper's privacy must be honored and the camper treated with all respect due him or her. If at any time you feel that something is not being done about the situation, you are encouraged to discuss your concern with the nurse and/or director and if you feel that it is call for, you may contact the Sexual Abuse Hotline. The number for the Sexual Abuse Hotline is: 1-800-284-7821.