

**Last Updated: December 2024**

## **Behavior and Discipline Policy for Lowell Camp**

This policy outlines behavior expectations and rules for all camp participants, the process for handling policy violations, and examples of consequences campers who violate the policy may face. It reflects high standards of personal integrity, behavior, and community that promote trust, fun, and a safe environment.

At camp, we aim to create an environment where each camper is valued and respected and where they value and respect the people around them. Through modeling, teaching, practice, and clear and consistent limits, we teach our campers to have and show empathy, honor the thoughts and personal spaces of others, advocate for themselves, and regulate their behavior appropriately in varied camp contexts. We use research-based strategies and best practices to create age-appropriate responses to behaviors that create an unsafe or disruptive environment.

Even with proactive structures in place, campers may occasionally make mistakes, push limits, or lose self-control. In these situations, the camp staff will reinforce limits, hold campers accountable for their actions, guide them in repairing any harm they may have caused, and help them make better choices in the future. Staff will also work with campers to determine whether modifications in the environment or activity expectations may be beneficial, especially when a pattern of behavior emerges. Staff considers age, proven strategies, behavior history, and the circumstances of the current situation while striving for consistency of expectations and addressing individual needs.

### **General Behavior Expectations**

Take care of yourself:

- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Be safe and help others feel safe.

Take care of others:

- Be kind and respectful.
- Support an atmosphere that respects others' enjoyment and participation.
- Use appropriate and respectful words to solve problems.

Take care of this place:

- Respect the environment (materials, equipment, and property).

### **Reporting Expectations**

Any camper, parent, guardian, or staff member who witnesses or experiences social aggression, bullying, discrimination, or harassment should immediately inform the appropriate camp counselor, activity leader, or camp director. Retaliation for good-faith reporting is strictly prohibited.

## **Intervention**

- The well-being of the entire camp community is paramount and will always be prioritized.
  - Camp staff will seek to investigate multiple perspectives (if applicable) and understand behaviors before determining intervention strategies.
  - Violations of behavior expectations are documented; this documentation helps identify patterns with the goal of improving behavior.
  - Violations that occur outside of camp hours or the camp's physical space may also result in intervention and consequences if they significantly impact the camp's culture and sense of belonging.

## **Family/Guardian Expectations**

Helping campers grow and mature requires an open, honest, and trusting partnership between the camp and its participants' families.

- The camp will communicate with families about any issues or interventions in a timely manner and will support them whenever possible in addressing behavior concerns.
- Families are encouraged to work with their campers to learn from mistakes and reinforce any interventions or consequences issued by the camp.

## **Types of Unacceptable Behavior**

Unacceptable behavior comes in many forms and can occur during camp hours, outside of camp hours, on camp property, or while participating in camp-related activities offsite. The examples below are illustrative and not comprehensive. Each situation is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to understand the circumstances, impacts, and any outside influencing factors.

### **Disruptive Behaviors**

- Interrupting or disturbing group activities.
- Inappropriate remarks or gestures.
- Disrespecting personal space.

### **Unsafe Activities**

- Engaging in dangerous physical activities without supervision or permission.
- Vandalizing camp property.
- Using camp equipment inappropriately.

### **Social Aggression and Bullying**

- Verbal, emotional, or physical harm intended to hurt another camper.
- Cyberbullying using devices during camp or in connection with camp activities.

### **Physical Harm**

- Possession or use of prohibited items such as weapons, drugs, alcohol, or vaping devices.
- Physical altercations or assaults, including sexual assault.

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

- Harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected status.

## **Consequences**

Consequences are determined based on the severity of the behavior, age of the camper, and circumstances. Staff works to ensure consequences are logical, effective, and appropriate. Examples include:

### Minor Infractions:

- Verbal reminders or prompts.
- Temporary removal from an activity.
- Repairing harm (e.g., cleaning or apologizing).

### Moderate Infractions:

- Loss of privileges (e.g., participation in specific activities).
- Parent/guardian notification and meeting.
- Completion of a related educational task.

### Serious Infractions:

- Suspension from camp activities for a specified period.
- Permanent removal from camp.

Camp staff will collaborate with families to ensure that interventions are consistent and effective. Extreme situations may require notification of authorities or external support services.