

- Tell campers to ask permission if they want to leave where the group is (e.g., go to the bathroom or get something from their backpack). YLs or Staff will go with them OR Staff will maintain visual contact while they go to their pack.
- At Tilden, Staff/YL always check the bathrooms before a camper enters, since they are public and anyone could be inside. If other Staff can see them, one (1) person can walk a camper to the bathroom and wait outside. Ask the other staff to watch that you stayed out of the bathroom after checking it's empty.
- No camper is ever alone with a single Staff/YL. This is the IMPORTANT Rule of 3 covered in the YL handbook.
- Show campers all areas that are ok to be in & those off limits.
- Count all your campers at 3 regular times throughout the day (on the Daily Log sheets), AND before & after leaving or returning to your site. E.g., count your group before you leave for the Little Farm AND when you get to the Little Farm.
- Only adults who are on the authorized pick-up list can get a camper at pick-up time. SDs text or call a parent to ask if someone else comes to pick up a camper.

## BOUNDARIES TO KEEP KIDS SAFE



# Sexual Abuse Prevention Guidelines

Recent research has shown that strong sexual abuse prevention policies serve two-fold in preventing incidents and discouraging potential predators from seeking employment.

Monkey Business Camp uses background checks as one form of protection. But since not all predators have a record, we also have the Rule of 3 to protect staff, campers, and MBC itself. This rule says to always be in groups of three or more, or within eyesight of other people at camp. By making sure you are never alone or out of sight with a camper, you protect yourself from any allegations, as conduct would have been visible to a third party. We put a strong emphasis on this rule because we know it can be hard to always keep in mind until you make it second nature. Always call for group bathroom/water runs. If you do need to walk up from Froggy Flats to the bathroom with one camper or need to help someone change clothes or clean up after a bathroom accident, bring a YL with you to support the process & act as a witness. In a pinch, ask for assistance from staff from other groups if needed.

- It's important to remember there is no one easy profile for a sexual predator, so rather than deeming anyone 'safe' or 'suspicious', focus on making sure you and other staff always adhere to the **Rule of 3**, even if it sometimes requires creative solutions such as standing in an open spot where you can see campers and other staff can see you.
- Leaders at camp will undergo additional training outside of this handbook. If you feel uncertain about something that has been occurring, reach out to your Site Director, and Heather or Samantha, to figure out next steps and to make sure everyone is in the loop.

# Placement of Staff at Camp

- **Encourage campers to sit next to you, not on you.** It can be hard to be mobile & help others if you have a camper on your lap.
- **Sit or stand where you can see most of camp,** facing the most campers. Look up and scan the whole area at regular intervals.
- **Stay ahead of campers at transitions.** Asking kids to line up behind “So and so” helps keep it clear and slows things down.
- **Make sure ratios look right.** Are you with only a couple kids? Look to see if you need to move or support another staff who has more.
- **Everyone on the team spread out amongst the campers.** At least 1 Staff in each larger area where campers are playing or eating, and YLs spread out in those areas, as well.
- **Youth Leaders cannot supervise a separate area on their own.**
- **Stay with activity or area until transition** or check in with team to see if switching works. Plan to use restroom on your break or during morning snack or other time when things are slower.



# Levels of Engagement

- There are 3 distinct levels of engagement with campers – **Individual**, **Small group**, and **Whole group**.
- The amount of time you'll spend at each level roughly tracks with your staff role in your group:
  - **Counselors, Floater/S3** will mostly spend time in the individual and small group level
  - **Group leaders, Counselors, Floaters /S2** will run Small groups and Closing circle. They also have their eye toward the whole group and timing.
  - **Site Directors/SD** will always have the Whole group on their mind, even while they are talking to individuals and running smaller groups. They will keep track of details like early pickups, the daily schedule, and timing throughout the day.



# Social Emotional Aspects of Camp

**With sessions up to 3 weeks long, we have a special opportunity to co-create with the same kids over time.**

- Campers will usually come for an entire session. We sometimes need to fill spaces so kids may come for shorter bits. Welcome and integrate all kids into camp.
- **Many of us love being with kids because they are often super positive, creative, flexible, and curious about the world.** At camp, we can really connect with that joy and help encourage it as we relate to all the kids.
- **Stretching outside individual preferences in service to others** is the highest expression of what this camp is all about. E.g., you might go to bed earlier than usual, because then you will show up more rested and in a better mood at camp.
- **Camp illicit emotions a range of emotion in kids, all totally “normal”:** from glee to irritation and all in between. Support kids feeling or expressing in healthy ways. But, if someone is treating another person unkindly, it is important for staff to address it in a simple, direct way, not ignore it, for example, *“It’s okay to be angry, but not to push someone (or use unkind words), is there another way you can share about it?”*
- **What staff have shared that supports them when they feeling emotional** - Deep breaths, asking for support from team, seeing large picture, not automatically making yourself or others wrong or right, inviting in a calm image or place. Challenges and discomfort are a natural part of life, not something one can get rid of, so just ride the wave until there is ease again.





## Ideas when these arise with kids:

***“I don’t have my water bottle.”*** – *“We have an extra one for today, let’s get your name on it.”* Staff, get one from Staff Misc Bin. Remind parents to bring one at pick up, either in person or through text thread.

***“I don’t have my sunblock.”*** - Remind parent to send tomorrow if camper marked on OTC to reapply & Use ours if sunburn feels eminent. Saying *“Come into the shade,”* helps as well.

***“I’m hungry!”*** – Are we eating soon? Near the end of the day? Check lunch, often food is in there. SD, give friendly reminder to parent to pack more food tomorrow. Call parent at AM snack if no snacks/lunch packed to get food brought to camp quickly. Encourage drinking water, sometimes it’s thirst.



# Challenging Behavior Communication Path

We want to have many points where we check in and deal with smaller problems before they become larger issues.

**Site Directors, please follow this route of interactions for challenging camper behaviors \*:**

- Speak to the camper calmly and address the behavior directly.
- Talk to the parent at pick-up, ask questions, and make a plan together.
- Mention the behavior in End of Day Survey, include camper name.
- Check back in with parent, usually daily, so you both can track if things are shifting in a positive direction or not. Often this communication helps a lot.
- If things are not improving, reach out to Samantha so she can come observe & see if it would be helpful for her to communicate with parents, to develop a more on-going conversation with one person.
- Sometimes camp is not a great fit, and Samantha will be the usual person to communicate with parents at that point. This happens rarely, usually once a year, out of hundreds of campers.

**\*Behaviors that need to be communicated to with parents at pick-up (or you might have to text to call them if they are carpooling):**

- Needing 1:1 attention frequently throughout the day to help them transition, play with peers, manage emotions, stay with the group, or for other reasons
- Physically harming other campers

# Conversations with Campers around Challenging Behaviors – All Staff 1

If a camper's behavior is posing challenges in the group:

- Lean toward them, get to know them, play with them, know their interests, so when you do need to remind, there is some connection & caring. Kids can tell!
- Addressing issues in a patient, proactive way is important, but not always easy. You might just want to avoid something, but some behaviors need addressing, it is not okay for them to go unchecked. Ask for help if you are noticing something, but unsure of what to do.
- Our jobs are not to force a camper, but to continually encourage and explain. Forcing a Sorry often doesn't work. Ask a camper to acknowledge and change their behavior.
- We might have to repeat things many times, that is not a failure.

Some scenarios at camp:

IF A CAMPER is teasing, putting down other campers', yelling loudly repeatedly, try saying

*"That way you said \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't fit with how we talk with each other at camp. We are making a space here where kids can feel safe and talk with each other. Did something happen with \_\_\_\_? Do you want help to talk with them about something?"* (& If someone is upset about it – *"Let's check in with them and let them know you won't keep doing that."*)



# Conversations with Campers around Challenging Behaviors – All Staff 2

IF A CAMPER is shoving, throwing too hard at medic, grabbing things, etc.

- YOU CAN TRY – *“I wanted to check in about how excited you are about medic. When you threw that ball with all your force, it doesn’t work well, since we don’t want to hurt each other. Maybe we can play harder in some cases, when everyone has agreed, or you can throw harder at a friend on the other team, etc. Did something happen with \_\_\_?”* (& If someone else is upset about a camper’s behavior– *“Let’s check in with them and let them know you won’t keep doing that.”*)
- Sometimes boundary setting is necessary with campers who are making it not a great place for other campers. You might say, *“What’s happening now doesn’t work well at camp. This group of kids don’t all know each other yet and we need to stop doing things that bother someone. For camp to work for you, you’ll need to listen and change what you are doing.”* Or *“You need to stick with the group in order to be able to be at camp.”*
- All MBC staff, make sure your Site Director knows about any behaviors you have handled, so they can decide if they need to communicate with parents at pick up.



# Conversations with Parents around Challenging Behaviors – Site Directors 1

After you talk with the camper, give it some time to see how the behavior shifts. If it doesn't change in a way that works at camp, then check in with the parent/pick up person at the end of the day. If you want to check in with Samantha before you talk with a parent, she can listen and support you.

Some examples of ways to talk with parents that have worked in the past:

- *“Hi \_\_\_\_\_. I just wanted to check in with you about something that’s been happening at camp. (Describe in the most neutral way you can what’s going on, avoiding judgement)”*
  - *\_\_\_\_\_ is pushing into people and grabbing them in ways that are upsetting other kids.*
  - *\_\_\_\_\_ is telling other campers they are bad at games and teasing them.*
  - *\_\_\_\_\_ is getting angry when games go a way they don’t like and is yelling at other campers and scaring them.*
  - *\_\_\_\_\_ is refusing to clean up with the group each day.*
- *“After talking about it with them \_\_\_ times, the behavior is still happening. I’m wondering what you do when this happens or if you have some ideas for me about how to work with this behavior at camp. Has this come up at school or in other camps?”*



# Conversations with Parents around Challenging Behaviors – Site Directors 2



- Parents may reply with some ideas that you can try or maybe something you can't try – offering treats or toys for good behavior, etc. Be clear about what can work at camp and come up with a plan with them to try the next day. Ask them if they can also talk with their child to help make the next day work better at camp
- Then try the new plan and see how it goes.
- If things don't feel like they are improving after you try with parent input/support -
  - You can say to the parent - *“Things don't really feel like they are shifting and I'm going to ask our asst. director to come observe and see if they have some ideas to help this go better at camp.”*
- If it feels like this is not a good fit, Samantha will be usual point person to talk with the parents, describing the work you have done and what we have observed and go forward from there.
- If it feels like we can make some adjustments to help this work better at camp, we'll work on that together.

# Special Needs

- In some cases, campers with special needs have worked well within our program from the start. In other cases, staff have communicated with a child and their family, to come up with plans that help to make camp work better, and, after some adjustments, it has worked overall. Sometimes the plans haven't worked to make camp a good fit for a camper and, unless the option of the family hiring a personal aide to support the camper was possible, the camper could no longer attend camp.
- Ultimately, we want to make sure that not only do we open camp to as many kids as possible, but also that kids do not take away one staff from the entire group to help support them, and that kids do not scare away other kids, due to their behavior.
- For our full policies regarding Special Needs and Behavioral Challenges, be sure to read details within our [camp policies](#). These are ones that parents signed off on, although sometimes they may not have read.





We learn best with positive feedback & connection. Discuss strategies at Team Meetings before Camp.

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### How to Work With...\*

- Kids who are on their own at camp. Maybe 1st time at camp, don't know anyone.
- Kids at Circle who are not involved, or are distracted and distracting others, or wanting to go play something else. Kids who complain about activities.
- Kids who aren't listening to staff, YLs, or other campers.
- Youth Leaders who seem upset about what campers are doing and giving mixed messages to campers.
- Parents who arrive before 8:30 and want to enter the program (not YL parents.)

\*We sometimes print list to discuss for team meetings.



**Halfway done!**  
**Photo Break**



Wonderful staff like you make Monkey Business amazing! Thank you!