



# Counselor/Camper Code of Conduct

At Ridge Haven, the counselor is expected to supervise campers throughout the duration of the camp week. In so doing they are expected to interact with children in a mature, capable, safe, caring, responsible manner with a high level of accountability.

The code of conduct instructs how adults are to interact with campers/children and the boundaries that staff are expected to observe. Vigilance is the key to protect children from abuse.

## Accountability

Each staff member, whether hired or volunteer, is responsible for giving and accepting feedback. You are to understand what is safe and acceptable interaction between adult and child and be ready to intervene when there is any questionable behavior that crosses a child's boundaries.

1. Remain present in the situation at question
2. Speak directly to the staff member about the observed boundary violation
3. Speak with the ministry director regarding your observation.

## Visibility and Supervision

When with campers, you should be visible by both other adults and children at all times. This includes never being alone with a single camper in a room with a door closed, or any area that is secluded or hidden from view.

1. All interactions with campers should be **OBSERVABLE** and **INTERRUPTABLE**
2. Be within eyesight of your campers except when they are changing, showering or using the bathroom, in which case, you should be within earshot of your campers
3. When campers are showering, changing, and other similar situations there should always be two counselors nearby.

4. When conducting a one-on-one conversation with a camper make sure you are still able to see your other campers/they can see you and that there are other staff members clearly monitoring your interaction.

## Discipline

1. Correction at camp should be used to appropriately address unruly behavior.
2. Ridge Haven staff and volunteers should never spank, slap, hit, shame, yell at, or humiliate their campers as a form of discipline.
3. An appropriate form of discipline is taking away privileges (ex. No swimming for 5 minutes.)
4. For a major offense or repeatedly unruly behavior please contact your Camp Director.

## Touch

Healthy and caring touch can be necessary to spotting (during ropes course activities) children or assisting with camp activities. Additionally, it is valuable to children. Unhealthy touch is abusive. The following guidelines apply to touch at camp.

1. Adults and other youth or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault children.
2. The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise, side hugs, pats on the shoulder/upper back.
  - a. For nursery aged children – touching their hands or holding them may be appropriate when other adults are present.
3. The following behaviors between staff or volunteers and children are inappropriate and shall not be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs; showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child; sleeping in bed with a child; inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development; flirtatious or seductive looks; any form of affection that is unwanted by the child; showing sexually-suggestive videos or playing sexually-suggestive games with any child; any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature

## Verbal Interactions

The words used during your interactions with campers should be supportive and encouraging. Staff and volunteers should be careful not to favor or show special treatment toward any camper. Inappropriate communication with campers includes: shaming, belittling, humiliating, name calling, using harsh language, cursing, threatening or frightening campers.

## Technology

1. Only the camp photographer(s) will be taking photos of campers.
2. Staff and volunteers should not engage in social networking with children and youth without the permission of the parent or guardian.
3. Campers are not allowed to have any electronics throughout the week, as “unplugging” is something that Ridge Haven is trying to help these kids learn how to do. We do not want electronics to distract your campers or you. Unless told otherwise, campers are never to use electronics and you are asked to only have your phone in case of emergency. Your focus should be always on your campers.

## Reporting

1. Any and all knowledge or suspicion of abuse or potential abuse or any kind including physical danger due to his or her own actions (such as cutting, suicidal thoughts) must be reported immediately using the *Suspicion or Disclosure of Abuse Report Form*.
2. Any instance of this Code of Conduct being broken (including accidents or instances outside your control) needs to be reported immediately to a camp director. You will be asked to detail the incident using the *Camper Conduct Incident Report Form*.



## Camper Conduct Acknowledgement Form

**I acknowledge** that I have received, read, understand and agree to Ridge Haven’s Camper Code of Conduct. I have familiarized myself with the procedures for reporting suspected abuse. Additionally, it is my responsibility to read and comply with any future updates on this policy or changes in how suspected cases of abuse are to be reported.

**I give permission** to anyone who observes any inappropriate behavior or violation of this Code of Conduct on my part to speak to me about my behavior and I will not take offense. The protection of children is more important than my pride. I also understand that such behavior will be reported to the camp director.

**I confirm** that I have not been accused of (to the best of my knowledge), been investigated for, or prosecuted for instances involving any form of abuse or inappropriate behavior with a child.

**I agree** not to engage in such behaviors.

**I further agree** that as an individual who has earned trust from a child, I will not tolerate physical, emotional or sexual child abuse or neglect.

**I agree** to immediately report any responsible suspicion of or disclosure of inappropriate behavior between adults and minors, or between two minors when one has the power over the other through age or physical abilities, to the appropriate leadership and in accordance with our reporting protocol.

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Name

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Position

Date

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Supervisor’s Signature