

Section 8: SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Our Ministry at Suttle Lake Camp

Suttle Lake Camp is a special place to many people because of friendships made there, an awakened sense of awe for God's creation, and a deepened faith in God brought to focus by counselors, teachers, and friends. As a dean you have accepted a special ministry of leadership that will help this all happen for another group of campers.

As your campers live, play, and work together for a week, they almost always make some deep and often lasting friendships. These friendships within the faith community often continue beyond camp, supporting each other in Christian discipleship. Those free times of talking and visiting around the dining table are important to the nurturing of these camp friendships. Having Suttle Lake staff lead team building challenge activities (which lead to the Challenge course) early in the week can overcome prejudices and barriers and help create larger communities of trusting friends.



Camp is a special place to get in touch with the wonder of God's creation. Even as we continue to upgrade our buildings, we remind you that this is "outdoor ministry" and encourage groups to do as much as possible outside among the trees, by the lake, under the sky. Children in our culture spend increasing time indoors, on pavement, and in structured programs. Persons who grow up with a strong bond with nature, and nature's Creator, are those who have played and imagined amongst bushes and trees and grass and dirt-- touching, listening, smelling, seeing. Suttle Lake and the surrounding several ecological zones are great places of discovery. We can help your group experience age appropriate ecology learning activities with the objective of helping campers know their interdependence with all nature.

In John's gospel we read, "For God so loved the world (cosmos, in Greek) that God gave God's only son." Camp is a place to help children and youth to also so love the world.

Ours is a ministry of Christian education and faith development. Through study and worship, with song and prayer, build your program within a context of witness to our faith in a loving God. Choose songs, skits, and stories carefully that reinforce the Christian story and values.

Share not only from the curriculum, but from your personal faith. Help your camp be a place where Christian discipleship can be talked about openly, where questions are

encouraged even if they cannot be answered. Some of your campers will have no other community where this happens.

Program Goals & Objectives

Opportunities for teaching and learning

- Opportunities through camp activities to learn at least 2 new skills or take previous skills to a new level.

Examples: archery, fishing, hiking, outdoor cooking, donkey/horse rides, donkey/horse care, mountain biking, outdoor living skills, water sports, music, writing, drama, arts & crafts, intercultural exchange.

- Opportunities to learn new songs, games, skits, and fun play.

Examples: participation at campfire, morning watch, free time, all-camp programs.

Self-esteem development

- Opportunities to discover and grow independently.

Examples: daily activities, choosing new activities.

- Opportunities to learn from camp leaders.

Examples: how to make new friends, how to perform a specific task, encouraging campers to try something new.

Interdependence with persons

- Daily participation in group decision-making and problem solving.

Examples: daily living groups, small groups, challenge course, initiative games.

- Community life participation—daily rotation of group living requirements.

Examples: KP, bathroom cleaning, cabin cleaning, grounds crew.

- Making new friendships

Examples: cabin leaders encourage campers to make at least 2 new friends each week.

Interdependence with creation

- Focus on “outdoor ministry” and setting programs outside of camp buildings.

Examples: morning watch, sitting in the grass, going to the beach, sitting under the trees, observing the stars.

- Use of sensory awareness activities—touching, listening, seeing, smelling.

Examples: ecology games for all-camp programs, cabin group activities, self-guided nature trails, Tidepool trips.

Expanding faith in God

- Practice praying—at least 3 different varieties.

Examples: aloud, in groups, private quiet times, walking labyrinth, prayer partners, grace before meals.

- Supporting each other in Christian discipleship.

Examples: call attention to or articulate in words: times of separation, forgiveness, reconciliation, and listening. Recognizing Christian values in action: sharing, caring, consideration, gentleness, and accountability.

- Sense of Christian life as journey.

Examples: affirm questions, encourage exploration in discussions, use your own stories, use of Biblical stories, use of stories from other people in faith tradition, use skits to actively involve campers in interpreting the tradition.

Opportunities for service

- Weekly service projects at camp or in local community.

Examples: trail maintenance, removing invasive species, and collecting items for low-income families.

- Sharing resources with children and youth around the world—learning about their needs.

Examples: UMCOR, Habitat for Humanity, UNICEF, Heifer Project International, preparing Health kits, supporting a homeless shelter, food bank or soup kitchen.

Tips on Inviting Staff

Give careful consideration to your staffing needs before you begin to recruit staff.

- † Think through the positions you need filled; for example you might need 12 leaders.
- † Think through the gifts you need in particular staff persons; such as you might need one who can lead music, one who can design craft options, four who can lead a learning option/seminar, and one who can lead large group games.
- † Think through the skills you either do not have the time to teach or that you cannot train a person to do (such as love children or be open to varying opinions). These are the skills that you see as essential in all persons you recruit.
- † Think through your own particular biases. If you are aware of a particular bias within yourself, and a person you are considering does not share that bias, ask yourself if this will cause tension or friction on the staff. If so, it might be best deciding not to ask the person to serve on your staff.
- † Think through what you are expecting of your staff members (how many training sessions, what kind of preparation for camp is needed, etc.)

Call upon the Camp Director for staff suggestions.

The Camp Director is a wealth of knowledge, having made contacts all year with persons who might be willing to serve at camp. Your Camp Director will also have a list of experienced volunteers and persons who have expressed interested in being on a camp staff.

Recruit potential leaders by personal invitation. If possible, invite them face-to-face. Persons respond best to a personal invitation to serve at camp. Form letters, or even personal letters, are easy to ignore and toss aside.

Always invite specific persons, rather than ask for volunteers. If you simply ask for volunteers, you may find yourself with an unsuitable person on your staff. Getting rid of the wrong volunteer is often more difficult than seeking out and inviting the right one. Ask other people for suggestions (that is not asking for volunteers).

You, as Dean, should be doing the inviting. Do not rely on someone else to secure your staff. You need leaders with whom you are comfortable. More responsibility can be expected from those persons you yourself have recruited.

Be open and honest about the requirements. Explaining the task in an honest way elicits trust and greater potential for positive response (this year and in the future).

Give persons the chance to answer for themselves. Don't assume that obligations to family or work will prevent them from serving on your staff. If a particular person has the qualities you seek in a leader, invite them to be a part of your staff. A general guideline is to let persons tell you no, don't say no for them!

If you do not know the person suggested to you as a possible volunteer, get to know the person before you invite him/her. It is most important that you feel comfortable with their leadership style, theology, ability to relate to other adults and ability to safely work with campers.

Recruit leaders as early as possible, so they have time to adequately prepare and deal with training. Also, if you can get your request for their service before their summer plans are locked in, you have a better chance of receiving a positive response.

If you are returning as a dean, invite some new persons to join your staff. While it is easy to ask the same persons year after year, invite some new persons to experience the joy of camping. You will be helping to increase the pool of volunteers for camp.

Be intentional about inviting persons of differing racial and cultural groups. The inclusive nature of the United Methodist Church is one of its strengths and challenges. Make sure that everyone would feel welcomed at your camp and that a diversity of people are represented to the best of your ability.

Accept a "No!" Don't try to argue someone out of a "no." Concern for a person means they are validated in their own knowledge of where they are and what they can handle.

Over-invite. That's another way of saying be prepared for the unexpected. Pastors move and their summer plans may change. Illnesses come. Jobs change. Family emergencies erupt. All of which mean that leaders may drop off your staff at the last minute. Be prepared by lining up more leaders than you need.

Before you contact a potential leader, spend a moment in prayer. Seek God's guidance in communicating the invitation you are extending to each person in a faithful and effective way.

Decisions to Make Before Meeting with Leadership Staff for Training

Keep communicating with leaders you have invited to join your staff. Let them know you are looking forward to the camp session, reconfirm your expectation to be with them during the camp session (lest they forget), and give clear times for when they are expected at camp. Share with the staff members what will be happening during camp as plans develop, so the staff members can begin to envision the session with you. Decide how you are going to use your staff members during the camp session. Most likely you will want to ask staff members to take on various assignments during the session. Begin communicating your expectations with them (so folks can be prepared). Decide how you want to make staff assignments and establish staff teams. This can be done by you (as dean) or by the staff persons themselves in a process established by the group. As dean you will want to be sensitive to your staff and how persons work together; if there is a need to "unyoke" a team, handle that as quickly and efficiently as possible, for unhappy staff teams do not provide a good experience for the staff members or the campers.

What Your Training Should Include

In training your staff, begin with prayer. Pray for those campers joining you for the session of camp. Pray for one another. Pray that each of you might be open to God's spirit moving through the camp experience.

How much training is needed? There is never as much time as we would like for training. It is sometimes difficult to get all of your staff together at one time. But time spent on staff training will pay off in a higher level of confidence in leaders' abilities and a better experience for campers.

It is ideal to do training well in advance of the camp. Total leader training time should equal the amount of time the leader is responsible for the campers. You as dean will have to determine the amount of training you feel you can lead and provide your staff. Whatever your model, include intentional group-building exercises as a part of your staff training time. Building relationships among staff will enhance the camp experience. Spiritual preparation and the deepening of relationships can be achieved through worship, play and get-acquainted games and exercises. How your staff relates as "model community" is important.

Develop together the expectations the staff members have of one another. Some sample expectations include:

- * Each person will share responsibility for the success of the camp.
- * Each person will do a fair share of the work involved.
- * Each person will be open to other ideas and viewpoints.
- * Each person will respect one another's rights to have and express an opinion.
- * Each person is willing to work together to resolve conflicts.

Walk through the camp session, explaining the theme, the goals, and the schedule. Ask for feedback and questions. It will be most helpful to you, and your leaders, if you state up front whether plans are set or whether you are open to change and suggestions.

Assign leaders to help with additional areas of leadership responsibility. Utilizing the means decided upon before meeting with staff, consider such assignments as: small groups, theme talks, witnesses, grace, runners for meals, and what persons need to bring to camp.

As small group facilitators, leaders need to be made aware of your expectations and the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team's requirements and guidelines. Late night groups should not be used to encourage campers to share deep, dark secrets of their lives right before bed. This is a health and safety issue for the campers and the entire group. Campers should only share what they are comfortable sharing. Deeper levels of sharing are better done in the daylight hours of small group time. No one dare invade another's sacred space unless invited.

Carefully review leaders' roles and responsibilities at camp. It is important that each person understands clearly what is happening and what is expected of him/her. It is also most important to be clear on how far the responsibility of the assignment extends. For example, if a leader is in charge of boating, does she/he have the authority to 1) beach a camper for a day? 2) beach a camper for the entire session/ or 3) send the camper home? Be clear in expectations, for the sake of all concerned.

Suggest leaders bring a leader bag. What's that? Well, it's a bag of goodies for camp -- such as markers, scissors, balloons, stickers, construction paper, balls, glue, magazines, band-aids, extra feminine hygiene products, and other fun essential things.

Discipline strategies and styles should be considered and discussed as part of leader training. Under no circumstances will spanking, neck or choke holds, ear or hair pulling or any other corporal punishment be used as a means of discipline. As each adult signed the covenant/application form, he/she agreed to the following... "I will find alternative ways to discipline, agreeing that under no circumstance will I use spanking, neck or choke holds, ear or hair pulling or any other corporal punishment as a means of discipline." It is the long-standing policy of the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team that all leaders are to find alternative ways to discipline.

The unique qualities of Suttle Lake should be discussed and, if possible, made a part of your camp session. The Camp Director has prepared a list of some ways you can use the out-of-doors at the camp site. Spend time to deal with the details of the camp site's procedures, rules, and emergency procedures. If you are on site, conduct a tour of the camp site and rediscover its potential.

Development of needed skills is a central focus of camp staff training. Many levels of experience and gifts are represented in staffs, so attention to some of the "how-to's" is essential. Skills training might include: song leading, game leading, story-telling, outdoor skills, environmental awareness, Biblical training/background for the theme, worship leadership, small group process skills, and effective listening. As a dean, please take the time to ask your staff about the areas where they feel competent and areas where they do not. At your meetings you may need to do some training in some of the less competent areas in order to assure your campers are well cared for. Competency-based training helps camp leaders become more effective at what they do by concentrating on the practical task and supplying necessary theory in a form closely related to the practical task.

How will you communicate the camp session's rules and expectations to the campers? Sort out ways the campers can both hear and accept these expectations from the staff as well as sharing their own expectations. Discuss ways to have expectations shared early in the camp session, and ways to check to see if they are being met during the session.

More Training Opportunities

At the Suttle Lake Camp on-site Training Event June 22-24, 2001 there will be opportunities for counselors and deans to receive further leadership training. Each participant will have the opportunity to take workshops in areas of behavior and discipline, camp programming, leading camp activities, and outdoor living skills.

Additional training can be planned at a church, the campsite, or in someone's home in advance of camp. To keep down the expenses of these meetings, consider brown bags or potluck meals.

Encourage staff to supplement the training you offer by participating in courses or workshops offered through other organizations. Courses and workshops useful for camping leaders may be offered through the Division of Education and Division of Youth Ministry, local theological seminaries (like Northwest House of Theological Studies in Salem), Project Adventure (which specializes in challenge course facilitation), or local community colleges. The American Camping Association offers great workshops geared for camp leaders examples include archery instruction, and small craft safety. Listings of workshops may also be found in either the United Methodist or Presbyterian newsletters. The Camp Director may also be able to suggest appropriate reading assignments or videos.

Plan on your staff gathering on site the day before the camp. This is an important time for everyone to get familiar with the site and procedures. A typical time-line would be for camp staff to meet on site Saturday starting around 1 :00 p.m., at 4:30 deans of both camps would meet with the Director or Program Director to coordinate facility use and activities, dinner at 5:30 including KP, after dinner the Director would review safety and abuse issues with the entire staff, Sunday breakfast would be planned for 8:00 a.m. and include making sack lunches, that afternoon the Volunteer Health Care Provider would meet with the entire staff to discuss medication distribution and emergency protocols.

This is a critical time for many camps in building a solid and unified staff. By this time, curriculum and program schedules have been developed, so time is often best used allowing leader teams and those with special responsibilities (such as song-leading or crafts) to plan together. Other important elements of this meeting include building team unity and faith sharing around your camp theme.

Nurture Your Staff

Before, During and After the Camp Session

During the planning and training sessions, and during the camp session itself, check to see how staff teams are working together. During camp, give staff members a break.

Provide feedback on how the staff members are relating to campers; people need to hear what they are doing well and where they can make improvements. Consider other ways you can support and nurture your staff members as they are supporting and nurturing the campers.

Working with CITs

Elementary camps (3rd grade through 6th grade) will be assigned one to four counselors-in-training (CITs) for the week, depending on the size of your camp. Each CIT has attended a training event to prepare them for the week. CITs should be invited to your pre-camp meetings so they can become part of the staff. For the week of camp, each CIT should be paired with a mature adult for mentoring proper leadership skills. CITs are never to be in direct supervision of campers. Using the *“Supervising Your Staff”* guidelines, you are asked to check in with the CIT and their co-leader as often as possible, especially during the beginning of the week.

The dean and cabin leader will be asked to complete an evaluation form during the week. There will be a mid-week evaluation on Tuesday or Wednesday so the CIT has an opportunity to improve their skills. There will also be an end-of-the-week evaluation to inform the CIT of their performance as a cabin leader. Deans are encouraged to offer advice and performance review in short interviews during the week on their own but the Program Director will also be available should the dean feel uncomfortable.

Planning Your Camp Program

Worship is important as we celebrate that we are gathered as the people of God. Worship can take many forms - morning watch, devotions, communion, faith sharing, campfire witnessing, praise time, singing, and prayer. Worship experiences may be developed and led by small groups, by leaders, and/or by the deans. Worship might happen in small groups, outdoors, indoors, and/or on a hike. Help campers experience the many different ways of praising God through song, scripture, skits, and prayer. Worship can happen in a variety of locations: Lake, Chapel, Three-Cross Chapel, Mt. Jefferson Lookout Circle, or your own designated "Home in the Woods." Build a variety of worship times into your schedule.

Large group and small group activities need to be balanced. It is important to connect with the entire gathered community during the camp session. Morning watch, evening campfires, and input times tend to be large group activities. But one of the joys of church camp is getting to know a small group of people well. Small groups allow for more individual growth and expression. Small group activities can include evening discussions to de-brief the day, theme discussions, learning options, and crafts. Most camp sessions include small group time, with 2 adults leading a group of 12-16 campers, while others have one adult leading 6-8 campers.

Cabin Time: This is a time for campers to get ready for bed, brush teeth, go to the bathroom, shower, etc. Some time should be set aside for the cabin group to share about the day's events, likes and dislikes, a cool discovery, or what is in store for them tomorrow. Counselors should offer a prayer or lead a group prayer time.

Choose & Do: This is a time when campers get to choose for themselves some activities to enjoy. It is important in the growth of a child to give them opportunities to make choices, however small they may be. We suggest that afternoons at Suttle Lake Camp not only be designated for "waterfront," but that other activities are available, such as crafts, archery, music, hikes, etc., that volunteer counselors and site staff can lead. Encourage your volunteers to think of a creative "interest group" activity that they could offer to the campers.

Crafts are an opportunity to learn new skills and encourage creative expression. Consider crafts that use indigenous materials, such as pine cones, leaves, sand, sunlight, etc.

Singing is both fun and group-building. Songs can awaken us and put us in a mind-set to hear. Plan times to sing together.

Recreation is more than just fun. Recreation gives a chance to stretch, to use energy, to get-acquainted in a non-threatening way, and to learn about working together. Consider using games and activities that support cooperation instead of competition. Recreation time might also include large group activities such as a talent show, a dance, or a group game like "Capture the Flag". Have a contingency plan in

mind for outdoor activities. Weather does not always cooperate with your plans. If rain comes, know your back-up plan!

Campfires provide times for fun and serious talking. They are times for story-telling, skits, singing, and faith sharing. They are times youth can lead and/or adults can lead. Deans often tie the campfire experience and theme together by leading the closing of each campfire. We recommend that deans review agendas in advance to ensure appropriate content. Your camp will have a designated fire circle. Make sure the campers wear appropriate clothing. The counselors should sit among the campers. You may request a summer resource staff person to build and extinguish the fire, and assist with campfire leadership as needed.

Using the camp site and the out-of-doors is important. Enjoy and use the camp site and the gifts of creation. Avoid designing a program that could be done as easily in a church basement.

Home-in-the-Woods - We encourage small groups to find a special place in the woods for their "home." This is best established on Monday, with time for campers to get acquainted with and introduce "their" tree, putting up a tarp and stick shelter, and adding decorations and mobiles through the week. This becomes a special place for group discussions, quiet listening and reflecting, and maybe a sleep-out. Be creative and maybe have an "openhouse" day where they show off their "home" to other groups. Give campers a chance to learn more about God's creation through Ecology Learning Activities.

Trips to Jack Creek, Metolius Head Waters, Black Butte, Wizard Falls Fish Hatchery Llama Farms, and Lava Caves are popular. These locations are just a little ways by van from camp. An orientation should be presented to the campers (and counselors) before hand to acquaint them with safety and interesting ecological facts. – See "OFF SITE TRIPS" for more information.

Night Hawks is an activity that encourages campers to enjoy the mysteries of the night. Learn the secrets of nocturnal animals, use camouflage, or star gazing with star charts. Having one of your counseling staff lead a Night Hawks activity, is a great way for them to be involved in leadership.

Try a new Ecology Activity! Create your own or use our resources. The camp has many resources with ideas for activities that encourage campers to further explore and learn about the natural world.

Meal times are good opportunities for community building and an important time to experience living in community. The atmosphere should be positive and upbeat. Grace is an important time at meals, for it gives campers an opportunity to pray out loud. Allow the campers time to enjoy their meals and to visit with other campers. As we gather at camp, consider discussions of food values; such as the importance of not wasting food. Meals might include such community activities such as announcements, and/or singing. Part of the community experience of sharing meals is serving each other by assisting with set-up and clean-up for meals. This responsibility will be shared among the camps on site. For the meals your camp session is responsible for you may want to make an assignment chart for groups.

Clean-up can take many forms. Include time for clean-up in cabins and "Sweep and Swipe" in bathrooms in your schedule. There is clean-up at each meal and there is clean-up as the camp session closes. Cleaning up after ourselves and caring for the camp teaches responsibility to campers

Free time is the camper's opportunity, and responsibility, to choose what s/he would like to do. Supervision during free time will ensure the safety and appropriateness of activities chosen.

Rest time for campers is important and can take many forms - time to read, journal, meditate, write letters home, listening and sharing stories. An attitude of quiet respectfulness should be established, allowing those that need sleep to do so. Some think they are too old for this kind of time, but with the level of activity and emotions maintained during camp, rest is important. The Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team asks all camps to schedule one hour per day for rest and relaxation with an opportunity for sleep given to those who require it. This is a time to slow down and regain some energy for the rest of the day. This is important for both campers and counselors. Counselors need to stay with their campers unless they have arranged for someone to relieve them. Rest time may also be enjoyed away from the cabin in a quiet location, as long as the dean is informed of the location.

Lights-Out is a significant losing time to reflect on the day allowing campers to begin putting names to the feelings and experiences of the day. This might be done in small groups or in cabins. This is a great opportunity for a group prayer, celebrating what God has done throughout the day. The dean or an assistant should check on cabins each night to ensure all are in their cabins and preparing for sleep. Some deans develop special "good night" rituals. Counselors are to stay with their cabin through the night. Discuss with your Director the appropriate time for "lights out" for your age-level.

Sleep-outs – The Tipi's are available for small group sleep-outs – schedule use of the Tipi's with camp staff. Sleep outs on the field are fun too, and can be done in larger groups.

Think through how you will deliver mail. The traditional "mail call" may leave out or embarrass some campers. We suggest that deans distribute mail to the counselors to give out discreetly during cabin time.

Is a dress-up dinner part of your camp's tradition? Some camps have a special dinner on one of the last nights, and the adults serve the campers. For some, this means the adults dress up (if so, tell your leaders) and for some the campers dress up (if so, first time campers need to know).

Think through the camp store for your camp. Know what you want and when you want it, so you are ready for questions!

Staff meetings are an important part of the entire camp session - it gives a dean the opportunity to check in with leaders, to see how the session is progressing, to talk through upcoming activities, support each other on discipline issues, and to stop little problems before they become crises. And remember, as you plan staff meetings, determine what the campers will be doing while you are meeting! Plan ahead with site staff so adequate summer resource staff are available to supervise your campers. Two or three summer resource staff will lead campers in group games during this time. These games may consist of a variety of activities such as court games, large group field games, ecology games/activities, a camp service project, and more.

Progression is a new word we are learning in camping circles. "Progression" reminds us that campers come to camp year after year, and so we should "save some of the good stuff" for future years, and not try to do every activity the camp has every year. For example, if a first grade camper at Suttle Lake has already had an opportunity to hike to the top of Black Butte, tube in the creek, and climb the wall, what's left? Don't try to do it all at your camp. Keep in mind that you are part of a much larger camping program.

Leader time is a time apart from campers ... for regrouping, perspective seeking, taking a shower, or a few moments of rest. Some camps rotate supervision of large group recreation or seminar/craft classes so that each leader can have a short break at some time during the camp session. The Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team urges deans to work towards scheduling 2 hours per day free from assigned camp responsibilities.

OFF-SITE TRIPS - Suttle Lake Camp is located in a wonderful area full of special places to go and see. There are many considerations to be made when planning off-site trips. They must be planned well in advance of camp. Parents must be notified in advance of any off-site trips in the welcome letter from the registrar. The Director must notify the Forest Service of where we plan to take campers each summer. Equipment and providers for rafting and other activities must be secured. Drivers must be checked out by camp staff on camp vehicles. If your activity is more than 20 minutes away from emergency medical services, you must have a person with special 2nd-level first aid training with you. If you are more than 60 minutes away from EMS, you must have someone with wilderness first aid training. Please see "WHEN CAMPERS INTERMINGLE WITH THE PUBLIC" in the appendix for more safety protocols.

THE FIRST DAY – CAMPER ARRIVAL!!

The first 24 hours are important for getting acquainted, group building, developing trust, and laying out goals for the entire camp session. The campers' first impression is set by what they see and how they are greeted. Be ready to greet campers and their parents before registration. Campers register from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. on opening day (usually Sunday) in the clearing by Pioneer Lodge. Site Staff will set-up registration so that each camper will check-in with the volunteer Health Care Provider first, and a camp staff person can take care of all the final paperwork and payments. This will work best if the

dean is available with a camp roster and cabin assignments, ready to greet campers and parents and introducing the camper to the responsible cabin counselor. It is important to get campers involved and acquainted as soon as possible. Opening exercises should loosen campers up and begin to build community in ways that are fun and non-threatening. Resource persons can be leading a flexible large group activity/game. Counselors should have name tags ready and seek to gather several campers before making the trip to their cabin. Extra staff can greet and assist campers whose counselor is on a trip to the cabin. The camp store is open during registration. Before dinner each counselor should plan activities to help their group know each other's names, and begin the process of setting cabin rules and goals. As a dean you should schedule a site orientation. A Round Robin tour is a fun way to help campers get oriented to camp quickly. This is a tour of special use areas around camp where brief orientations can be given to campers. Typically this is planned from 7-7:45 PM starting with a fire drill (bell ringing continuously) with everyone meeting in the parking lot for staff introductions and instructions for Round Robin. Be sure to discuss this time with the Camp Director so site staff can be included in this orientation.

Saturday Mornings (or LAST DAY)

Planning for the last day at camp is equally important. Encouragement and empowerment are important elements in planning for the last 24 hours of your camp session. The schedule should include time for feedback and evaluation (Suttle Lake staff will provide camper evaluations at the last meal), closure in relationships, and good-byes. Activities that provide closure to your program theme can help shift campers' focus back homeward as the session ends.

All cabins must be cleaned and swept and ALL luggage and personal belongings need to be OUT of cabins before breakfast (8:15 a.m on last day) including staff belongings. Designate the place for gear storage and parental pickup (usually registration area).

You may suggest some

Friday evening packing and cleaning to help cabins get organized. Plan cleaning of common areas after breakfast (9-9:30) so you or your staff are not left with a large task. Once you begin your group closing at 9:30, little attention will be given to cleaning or gear.

All medications left with the health official need to be returned to campers. The store is open at closing time. Extra envelopes with any remaining money to be returned to campers from the store. Designate an area for lost and found items where campers and parents are likely to look.

You need to have a system to check out all campers to their parents, or the party designated for pickup at check in.

When campers are checked out and program areas put in order, you should have an evaluation meeting with your staff. Counselors are to complete evaluations of the program and of the dean to be turned in before leaving camp. It is easiest for you if you

can complete your evaluation-of-counselor forms on Friday. Please leave completed forms at the Suttle Lake office.

Site-staff led Program Activities

In addition to leading large group games while your staff has a staff meeting, and helping with campfire programs if requested, the following program options are available for you and are led by the Suttle Lake Summer Resource Staff. All activities require additional supervision from counselors at a 10:1 ratio. If you are interested in using any of these programs, please contact Suttle Lake at least two weeks prior to your camp so we can set a day and time for each activity.

1. Challenge Course

The challenge course at Suttle Lake Camp is a low elements ropes course designed for team building and cooperation of groups between 8 and 15 people. It is a great tool to use throughout the week to build cohesive cabin or family groups, or at a time when a group needs to improve cooperation. A summer resource person facilitates the process as the group experiences a series of challenges or obstacles, followed by a discussion or processing session. An hour-and-a-half is required for an adequate experience. We will have at least 4 trained facilitators to enable a maximum of 2 family groups to simultaneously share in the experience.

2. Waterfront – This year, we hope to have enough lifeguards to allow for 3 waterfront activities to happen at once, instead of 2. The four main activities at the Suttle Lake waterfront are:

Swimming – up to 40 campers

Kayaking – 7 new sit-upon play kayaks will be added to a designated area near the swimming area. We see this activity as an extension of swimming play. They are especially fun in those waves that seem to come up most afternoons! If a kayak “trip” on the lake is desired by a group of 7 or less, this can be arranged with the lifeguards.

Canoeing – up to 18 persons (3 per canoe). Generally, morning is best for canoeing on the lake before the winds pick up. Canoeing in the creek above the dam is another option.

Inner Tubing down the creek – 10 campers plus a counselor & lifeguard. This activity is most popular with younger campers, and is generally best done as a cabin group activity, although other options can be made.



A trip to Scout Lake for Swimming in warmer water is popular. Usually this is incorporated into a hike (1.5 miles one way), a cookout at the campground (lunch only

please – the campground doesn't like us taking a campsite in the evening), and sometimes a one-way van trip back for younger campers.

3. Archery

Up to 10 campers and one counselor may participate in Archery instruction by a summer resource person.

4. Cook Outs

Cookouts can be scheduled as part of the each camp's weekly program. Each age level has a specific day and time for their cookout during the week. All cookout menus will be set ahead of time by Suttle Lake staff. A simple cookout form shall be filled out by each family group and turned in to the Suttle Lake resource staff. Each cookout group will have a choice between two menus for their meal, with younger groups preparing simple meals and junior high preparing more complicated menus. This eliminates stressful meal planning and places more emphasis on working together as a group to prepare a meal. If needed, a camp resource person will be present at each cookout to help facilitate the process.

The Camp Director and Program Director are Your Partners in Ministry

Contact the Camp Staff as Soon as Possible

Deans should initiate communication with the camp staff as soon as possible.

Camp Staff are charged with many duties and are not simply caretakers of the property, changers of the lights, and supervisors of the meals. A Camp Director's responsibilities include:

- * supervising the planning, staffing, and carrying out of programs
- * ensuring programs comply with the program standards of the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team
- * ensuring programs are safe and that the program content is appropriate
- * supervising the recruiting, training, and performance of deans, work area members, and other persons involved in camping ministries at a given site,
- * managing the day to day finances of camping ministries at that site
- * supervising, evaluating, and hiring camp staff
- * supervising the development and maintenance of the site.

Your Camp Staff is a source of information and is your primary contact at the camp site. Your Camp Staff will be able to answer many of your questions. Plan to use them as a resource and share:

- * your hopes and dreams for your camp session
- * how you will work together
- * the expectations you have of one another
- * the covenant you will have with one another

* how you handle discipline

Be in dialogue with the Camp Staff about issues surrounding your camp session! Use the following list of questions as a starting point for planning many of the details of your session.

* Any special rules of the camp?

How does the director want to share the rules with the campers?

* Is there resource staff that might be available during the session (crafts, recreation, etc.)?

In what ways might the site staff person(s) be used?

How is that person(s)'s time scheduled?

(Is it through the director? right before camp? as things come up?)

What are the expectations that the director has for the site staff?

* When are meal times? Is there any flexibility with meal times?

(in case you want breakfast later or a backwards day)

* What are the camper's meal responsibilities?

How much time is needed from campers for set-up? clean-up?

* Can arrangements for special meals/menus be made?

What might be the possibilities for special meals (cookout, lunch for a hike, formal dinner)

How far in advance does the staff need to know these special requests?

* Is there any health screening of campers?

What does screening mean on site?

How are medications handled?

How are health forms reviewed?

* Where is the camp infirmary and how will its location be communicated to leaders/campers?

* Who will be providing first aid assistance?

How are you to work with that person and how will that person be introduced?

* Are snacks provided? When? How often?

Can special requests be made? If so, when does the director want that input?

* Is there a camp store?

What are its hours?

What is available at the camp store?

* What clean-up is expected ...

daily?

at the end of the entire camp session?

* What camp supplies will be provided by the site?

* What is anticipated for the camp director's and program director's involvement in planning before the camp?

meetings with leaders before camp?

your camp session?

* What is your camp's policy on smoking?

A no-smoking policy is encouraged for each camp, for both campers and leaders/staff.

* What is the expected number of campers for your session of camp?

What is the maximum number that may attend?

- * What is the maximum number of staff that the camp will cover through registration fees?
How is the site expense covered for staff numbers above normal ratios?
- * How much program money is available to you as dean and how might that money be used?
- * Will there be other groups on site whose presence limits the availability of some areas?
- * What meals are provided and what meals do you need to plan for?
- * How do you and your leaders receive reimbursement for program expenses?

More Important Communication with the Camp Director

Keep your Camp Director informed about such things as:

- * schedule for the entire session (so he/she knows the times for meals, camp stores, waterfront times, etc., etc.) 1 month before camp.
- * special needs or requests such as a sack lunch for a hike, or a meatless meal to discuss food chain issues, or what you want included in the camp store (sweets, pop, healthy snacks). Given sufficient notice, most requests can be accommodated.
- * plans for your staff arriving the day before camp. When will the staff arrive (what time of day)? How many are you expecting? What are the meal arrangements/needs? Will there be other groups on site whose presence limits the availability of some areas?

Work with the Camp Registrar

We use a centralized registration process through the Conference Office. In one phone call, camper's parents can find out if there is space available or change to a different camp theirs has filled. The camping registrar communicates with the different Camp Sites. Beginning this year Camper registration lists will be sent to you from the Suttle Lake Camp office. Just let us know when you would like to have an updated copy! Camper Health Forms and "about me" pages will be mailed to the Suttle Lake Camp office from the campers prior to camp. You will have a chance to review these when you arrive at camp. Campers are allowed to make cabin mate requests (one person limit), so be sure you have this information before you make cabin assignments! If you need this info before you come to camp, let us know and we will figure out a way to get copies to you.

If a camp fills (the maximum number of camper spots is reached) the Camp Director will contact you. Together you will need to make a determination if you are willing to take any more campers (that is, to raise your maximum number). That is your decision to make with the Camp Director.

Your list of leaders is due May 1st to ensure that you will meet the proper ratios and that the background/reference checks can be done in time.

A letter will be sent 3-6 weeks before the beginning of camp to every camper. This letter will include a welcome letter with a paragraph from you (the dean), a list of what to bring, camp policies, and directions to the camp. Your paragraph must include a

statement to parents if an off-site excursion is planned. Also include any additional items to be added to the “what to bring” list. The camp site needs your information to review before giving to the camping registrar.

Camper Safety Issues

A Word About Safety

Safety at camp is a major concern for the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team & Camp Directors. We all want campers and staff to be free from harm. Each camp has considered "risk management" to help ensure that the camp is safe for all participants. Policies and guidelines are in place to assist deans with handling these issues. It is understood that every situation is unique and no answer works for every situation. But the following policies and guidelines must be considered when planning and working through the camp session. When difficult situations arise during the camp session, remember that help and guidance are available from the Camp Director and/or the conference Camping Executive.

Rest Time

Rest time is the opportunity to be quiet ... to reflect, journal, write letters, stop for a few moments, and maybe even nap. Many campers will feel that they are too old for rest time .. even though their bodies may be craving it. The Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team asks that all camps consider scheduling one hour per day for rest/relaxation.

Believing that leaders and deans need some time to replenish themselves during the camp session, the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team urges deans to work toward the standards of the American Camping Commission to schedule two hours per day free from assigned camp responsibilities.

Waterfront Program

Any waterfront program or activity (including wading, swimming, boating, or rafting) shall have a qualified Waterfront Director present during the activity.

Policy on the Use of Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Campers attending age level camps, as well as leaders and deans, may not possess and/or consume alcohol or illegal drugs on site. If discovered consuming any illegal drug or alcohol, the person, whether a camper or volunteer adult, will be dismissed from camp and sent home.

The possession of alcohol/illegal drugs will carry consequences determined after consultation with the Camp Director and dean (and the emergency on-call person if needed).

Policy on Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications

It is the policy of the Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team that all medications be kept in a central, secure location under the supervision of the camp nurse. No campers/adult leaders shall be allowed to keep medications in their possession unless approved by the nurse, dean and Camp Director. It is the responsibility of the camp nurse to keep records and distribute medications according to camp policies. Adult leaders may be given access to the medication area to self medicate if approved by the nurse.

Policy on Leaving the Camp Property

Minor Campers may never go past established camp boundaries without adult supervision. For safety reasons, a camper who violates this boundary may be sent home from camp.

Leaders may not take minor campers off-site without consultation with the dean(s) and Camp Director. Violation of this policy may be cause for dismissal from camp.

Deans may not organize off-site trips without prior approval from the Camp Director. The Camp Director, before giving approval, shall:

- * contact the CCOM staff person, who shall notify the treasurer's office
- ensure there is adequate space/seat belts in each vehicle
- parents must be informed of any off-site trip
- copy each driver's license and proof of insurance for files; drivers must be age 22 or older.

Reasons to Send a Camper Home

Tough decisions must sometimes be made. Those of us in camping are in it because we believe in campers, we believe in God's grace, we believe in the power of a loving God, and the life-changing experience that a camp experience can provide. We want to keep the doors open in a camper's life, and not shut out a needy person from the camp experience.

But there are times when inappropriate behavior may require sending a camper home. When one camper is negatively dominating the camp session, or so disruptive that the experience of other campers is being harmed, the possibility of sending the camper home should be considered. The Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team believes that the use of alcohol/illegal drugs or the possession of firearms/ weapons are absolute reasons for sending a camper home.

There are other circumstances for which a camper may be dismissed from camp. Deans, depending on circumstances, and after consultation with the Camp Director, may send a camper home for such reasons as sexual misconduct, physical fighting, threats, inappropriate behavior, blatant racist behavior, not following safety guidelines, inappropriate or abusive language, and possession of illegal drugs/alcohol.

The reasons for considering to send a camper home are many and the situations are always difficult. Don't make the decision alone; remember there is the Camp Director and the on-call emergency person to assist you.

Please document and report such incidents of inappropriate behavior when they result in your decision to send a camper home. A report form is found in the appendix.

If you do send a camper home, complete the form, found in the appendix, and return to the Camp Director before you leave camp.

Behavior deemed inappropriate includes fighting (physical or verbal) between two campers, racial and sexual insults, continued bad-mouthing of a person or program, or consistent disregard for directions or the life of the camp community. If a situation is tense enough that a camper is sent to a dean for further discussion of his/her behavior, it would be helpful to have a record of that conversation on file (use the form in the appendix). File this form with the Camp Director before you leave camp.

Campers who exhibit violent behavior or who present a danger to themselves, to others or to camp property, may be physically restrained from doing such harm. If a situation arises requiring physical restraint, the dean, in consultation with the Camp Director, shall notify the camper's parents/guardians and/or pastor. In most cases, such a camper should be sent home and an appropriate report form completed. The form, found in the appendix, is to be returned to the Camp Director before you leave camp.

Concerning Deeply Troubled Campers

Pastors, local churches, parents and/or guardians have a responsibility to notify camps about the special needs of campers, particularly deeply troubled campers from incestuous, severely abusive, drug dependent, homeless or physically violent backgrounds. This also includes behavioral or medical conditions requiring special consideration or medication. The annual conference and particularly district superintendents are asked to assist in holding pastors and local churches accountable for this responsibility.

All persons, including deeply troubled campers are persons of sacred worth and are welcomed into full participation in camping ministries in this annual conference.

However meeting the needs of deeply troubled campers requires additional staff personnel and training, and camps are not generally staffed by persons who are professionally trained and qualified to meet the needs of deeply troubled campers.

Therefore, if a deeply troubled camper requires so much attention that it unreasonably detracts from the camp experience of other campers, or if a deeply troubled camper's needs are beyond the training and experience of camp staff, it is appropriate to seek additional professional help/staffing, decline to allow the troubled camper to register for camp or to send the troubled camper home.

When including troubled campers in the program of the camp session, there may be times when alternative individual activities which are properly supervised will be more appropriate. Camp leaders should be open to allowing an individual camper to occasionally opt out of a particular activity if that would better serve the needs of the individual or the group and if adequate staff and supervision are available.

Reporting Abuse

Abuse, be it physical or sexual or emotional, does occur. If it happens during your camp session, or if an incident of sexual or physical or emotional abuse is reported to one of your staff members during the camp session, it can be a most difficult moment. Hearing disclosures of abuse, and reporting that abuse, is emotionally taxing. Deans and staff members are not expected to handle abuse problems alone. There will be an emergency person on call to provide needed support and assistance during each camp session. The Camp Director is also there to assist.

We believe that reporting abuse to proper authorities is a covenantal, ethical responsibility. When we keep abuse a secret, we allow its occurrence to continue. When an abusive situation or behavior is identified and the abuse is named, we create the opportunity for healing in the life of the abused and the abuser.

The first step is to do what is reasonable to protect the child/youth from immediate danger and then report any abuse (by volunteer/staff/peer at camp or a person away from the camp setting) as the policies indicate. At the end of this section are guidelines to walk you through the process of reporting abuse. The appendix has appropriate forms to assist you in the required reporting process.

When the Session Has Ended

Evaluate the Camp Experience

Evaluate the session of camp! We learn from evaluations and we can celebrate through them. The Conference Camp & Retreat Ministry Team will provide evaluation forms; you as dean are asked to implement the evaluation process.

The following forms will be available from your Camp Director:

- * campers each fill out an evaluation form at the last meal.
- * leaders/staff members (each one has his/her own opportunity to evaluate)
- * as dean, you are asked to sit down with the Camp Director and evaluate the camp program and your staff. This will provide very helpful information for future recruitment.

Evaluation forms should be left with the Camp Director, for compilation. If you want to see the evaluations, ask the Camp Director for copies of the forms and/or compilation. Please share with leaders both positive comments and concerns. This is your responsibility as dean.

Turn in Your Expenses for Camp

Remember, documentation for expenses is important in our understanding of being good stewards. Please keep receipts for any purchases.

Turn in your request for reimbursement in a timely fashion. Please bring any receipts and a list of expenses with you to camp if possible. At the very least, send a request for reimbursement to the Camp Director within 30 days of the end of camp.

Follow-up on the Camp Experience

One way to personally follow-up the camp session, and bring some closure to it for yourself, is to read the evaluations, and share comments with staff members.

There are many other ways to follow up the camp session, such as ...

To the campers. This might include ...

- * a form letter recapping the events of camp and affirming good times.
- * an address list, with names/addresses by small groups (since we often only learn first names)
- * an individual letter or card (simply affirming the camper) sent a short time after camp
- * a postcard during the year to say "I think about you" or "I hope to be with you again".

To parents. This might include ...

- * a letter during camp explaining the theme for the entire session. This provides the parents some background for communication when the child/youth returns home, but does not disclose anything personal about the child/youth
- * a letter after camp expressing affirmation for the child/youth.

To leaders. This might include ...

- * a time to get together and de-brief (expressing positives & areas for growth)
- * notes during the year expressing your appreciation with an invitation to consider serving again
- * a form letter recapping the events of camp
- * a letter to the persons' Administrative Board/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee expressing your appreciation

To churches of the campers,

- * where you might invite a pastor to follow-up with the child/youth about camp

To the on-site staff.

If they served you well, words to them are always appreciated (sometimes they get overlooked).

All of these tasks, while time-consuming, are very much appreciated!