



Child Abuse

Child Abuse has become a nationwide issue over the last decade. Schools, camps and other youth organizations have come under intense scrutiny. We must be sensitive and well informed to avoid having potential difficulties in this area.

We cannot be too careful in the area of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. Even the appearance of wrong or a false allegation can cause irreparable damage to the reputation of the accused staff member and Woodland Christian Camp. Therefore, all staff members must be cautious in order to avoid doing anything that could be interpreted as sexual, physical or emotional abuse.

Expanded Statements

Sexual Abuse

1. Sexual Abuse Offenses fall into two main categories—touching and non-touching.
 - A. Touching offenses include the following:
 1. Fondling
 2. Oral, genital, or anal stimulation
 3. Non-violent intercourse
 4. Incest
 5. Rape
 6. Assault
 - B. Non-Touching offenses include the following:
 1. Verbal sexual stimulation
 2. Obscene phone calls
 3. Peeping in doors and windows
 4. Indecent exposure
 5. Causing or allowing a child to witness adult sexual relations.

Expanded Statements Continued

Physical Abuse

In the camp setting, physical abuse is most likely to happen when a counselor or other staff member is disciplining a camper. Anything done while disciplining a camper to inflict pain is considered child abuse. No hitting, slapping, spanking, squeezing or other activity which could be considered as physically abusive, either individually or as a group is permitted.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse includes, but is not limited to, screaming, derogatory remarks, and extended lecturing on bad behavior. No activity which could be considered as emotionally abusive, either individually or as a group, is permitted.

Helping a Victim of Child Abuse

After it has been disclosed that a child has been abused, certain steps should be taken to help the child.

LISTEN

1. Don't panic or overreact. Listen carefully to everything the child says. Don't fill in words for them. Don't ask leading questions.

BELIEVE

2. It is not your responsibility to determine whether the allegation is true.

PROTECT

3. Take the child to the Camp Director or Nurse. Discuss this matter only with the Camp Director or Nurse. Immediately inform the Camp Director.

AFFIRM

4. Children who have been victimized may feel sad, angry, fearful, anxious and depressed. Accept and understand the child's feelings. Avoid telling the child how he or she should feel. Emphasize that the child is not to blame for what has happened.

REFER

5. Tell only the Camp Director or the Nurse. Do not attempt to handle the problem alone. As a child custodian, you are mandated by law to report child abuse. The Camp Director will make the official report to the Child Protective Service.

Procedures for a Child Abused at Camp

1. If a staff member is suspected of child abuse, the Camp Director must be notified at once.
2. To the extent possible, the informant shall be kept confidential.
3. The child shall be removed from all contact with the suspected abuser.
4. The Camp Director and Program Director will confront the suspected child abuser.
5. If the Camp Director has reason to believe that any abuse or neglect has occurred, they shall report him/her over to the proper authorities.
6. The Camp Director will contact the parents to inform them of the situation.
7. A statement shall be made ready for public release. Woodland will cooperate with all agencies in this matter. The only public statements shall come from the Camp Director.

Procedures for a Child Abused Before Camp

If a child is determined to be an abused child, either by observation or through confiding in a counselor or other staff member that he/she has been abused, the following steps should be taken:

1. The counselor or staff member should counsel the child according to the guidelines set forth in *"Helping a Victim of Child Abuse."*
2. The staff member should inform only the Program Director and or the Camp Director of the situation.
3. The Camp Director will then follow legal procedures for informing the proper authorities.