

Safer Camp Policy – Quick Reference for Camp Leaders

Revised 07.2024

NOTE: All standards will be reviewed during the summer of 2024 for possible revision prior to the summer of 2025. Some changes were made, and approved by the PNCUCC prior to this summer.

1. Minimum Ratios for Direct Supervision:

Session	Grade Level	Ages	Minimum Ratios
You & Me (when parents have a break)	K - 4th	5-10	1:5
Kids Camp	2 nd - 4 th	6-10	1:6
Intermediate	5 th - 6 th	10-12	1:7
Jr High	7 th - 8 th	12-15	1:8
Sr High	10 th - 13 th	15-19	1:9

These are the MINIMUMS for direct camper supervision. There are a number of situations that warrant lower ratios – one or more campers with special needs or challenging behaviors, more challenging activities, weather, etc.

2. All Camp Leaders must be at least 18 years of age and be at least three (3) years older than the oldest youth they are supervising.

Though not required at this time, it is advised that for direct supervision of Jr High Campers, all authorized leaders be at least 18 and one year out of high school.

3. The showers in Stillwater are to be used primarily by authorized leaders. However, they may be used by campers under special and coordinated circumstances.

Example: campers with health issues that require more privacy, campers who are non-binary and prefer more private space, etc.

4. Shower House Supervision:

- Supervision, at a level that meets the Minimum Ratios for Supervision, is required at the Shower House.
- While the youths shower, at least one staff member should stand in the shower house doorway and within earshot of the youths.

It is allowable for leaders to stand inside the shower house, especially if the campers using the building have demonstrated risky behavior or if having the door open allows bugs to enter.

5. Short-Term, Substitute Volunteers during Youth Camps:

One-time partial day or substitute volunteers shall be chosen for a specific event by the Program/Event Director(s) in consultation with the camp Managing Director, who shall have veto power. At a minimum, partial day or substitute volunteers shall have a current, completed Criminal Background Check.

6. Communication Outside of Camp & Social Networking:

- **Related to out-of-camp connections and communication between authorized leaders and campers, a leader-camper relationship shall not progress beyond the initial home/church relationship.**

Example #1 – If Leader A babysat for Camper 2 before attending camp, it is acceptable for that activity to continue after camp.

Example #2 – If an authorized leader receives a new Facebook friend request from a camper, the request shall not be accepted, as it goes beyond the pre-existing relationship.

- **No Authorized Camp Leader shall send a “friend request” to any child or youth.** This includes all social networking sites and platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, etc.
- **Friend requests shall not be accepted from any campers who are minors.**

We recognize that there may be special circumstances regarding communication, not “friending.” For example, if a camper is reaching out due to trauma. These situations should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in tandem with the Managing Directors. All communication between authorized camp leaders and youths must be transparent.

7. Prohibited Behaviors:

- **One-on-one interactions between two program participants (any combination of children, youth, and/or Authorized Camp Leaders) in a private setting (including in bathrooms),**
- **Foul language**
- **Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, illegal drugs, firearms, and weapons of any kind**
- **Sharing of personal information related to relationships, sexual activity, drug/alcohol use, addiction, and recovery with children and youth.**
- **Bullying and harassment of any kind (from Appendix B)**

Harassment shall be defined as any behavior that is deemed degrading, insulting, dehumanizing, or otherwise inappropriate by any person who believes themselves to be the object or observer of such behavior. Harassment has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual’s performance or participation in camp/program activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive camp environment as determined by the object or observer of such behavior.

Harassment is commonly related, but not limited, to the following topics:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- National origin
- Sexuality
- Sexual orientation
- Gender
- Gender expression
- Gender identity
- Age
- Religion or theological beliefs
- Philosophical beliefs
- Differing abilities
- Economic status

8. Prohibited Behaviors – continued

- Inappropriate physical conduct (from Appendix A)

- Any physical or verbal interaction in an isolated area when only one Authorized Camp Leader is present
- Full-frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Showing affection in an isolated area
- Lap sitting
- Wrestling
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by any participant
- Piggyback rides
- Tickling
- Roughhousing
- Allowing a child to cling to an adult's leg
- Any type of massage given by or to a child
- Compliments or comments relating to physique or body development
- Touching the bottom, chest, or genital areas
- Any physical or verbal interaction in which consent is not freely granted by all parties involved prior to that interaction occurring

Appropriate physical interactions are limited to the following:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)
- High-fives and hand slapping
- Verbal praise
- Arms around shoulders
- Touching hands, shoulders, and arms

While the above behaviors are generally deemed appropriate, ***any physical interaction is inappropriate if unwanted by any participant.*** Clear verbal consent must be freely granted prior to any physical interaction, unless someone's immediate safety is at risk.

9. Policies specific to at N-Sid-Sen:

- Spirit Lodge, Syringa Lodge, and each cabin housing youth or children shall have at least two Authorized Camp Leaders.
- Authorized Camp Leaders shall not share rooms in Spirit Lodge or Syringa Lodge with children and/or youth, unless they are the parent or guardian of said child or youth.
- Authorized Camp Leaders shall not use the facilities in the Shower House when children or youth are present.

10. Responsibility of Mandatory Reporters

Regardless of the procedures outlined herein, each person who is considered a mandatory reporter under the statutes of the States of Washington and Idaho shall in good faith report when there is reason to believe abuse and neglect has occurred as described in Washington State Law (the Revised Code of Washington—RCW) 26.44.020 and Idaho State Law (Idaho Statutes) 16-16-1602, respectively. Incidents shall be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS).

The PNCUCC prefers that allegations requiring reporting first be reported to the camp Managing Director. If the allegation(s) involve the Managing Director, the allegation shall be reported to the Conference Minister, or to the Conference Moderator in the case of a conflict of interest. The camp Managing Director and the Conference Minister (or Conference Moderator as necessary) shall be considered mandatory reporters due to their supervisory roles and shall, without delay, make the initial report to police or child welfare authorities on behalf of the PNCUCC. The determination of any of these individuals that a reportable incident did not occur shall in no way prevent any other individual from reporting an allegation in good faith.

Nothing in this policy shall be considered a restraint of an individual's statutory obligation to report to authorities. Furthermore, no person shall be restrained from reporting an incident on the basis that they are not a mandatory reporter.