

Camp and the Internet

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Points to Make with Staff

- 1) **Educate your staff!** According to recent articles in the Wall Street Journal and The New York Times, many law firms, medical schools and graduate programs now routinely check the Internet to see how a candidate represents themselves online. Material online that is deemed inappropriate or in conflict with the values or standards of the company or program often results in rejection. Many undergraduate admissions departments are considering similar policies.
- 2) As part of the hiring process, the camp may collect the online addresses of a prospective counselor's social networking or weblog site that can be viewed by the public (has no privacy settings on it) and review them. (A candidate has the right not to reveal such a site. Doing so might end their candidacy). Content deemed offensive to camper parents or that is in conflict with camp policy may result in termination of candidacy or employment. Prospective and returning staff should be given prior notice that this guideline is in effect so they may adjust their online profiles, etc.
- 3) Counselors should be reminded that parents and campers often search for them online. The manner in which they represent themselves online speaks volumes about their character.
- 4) Once a staff member identifies him- or herself as an *employee of camp* in any Internet venue (social networking profile, weblog, "group page"), the "Camp Policies for Employees Regarding the Internet" takes hold. Violating these policies could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to possible termination of employment.
- 5) Once a staff member utilizes anything copyrighted by the camp (e.g., logo, name, any official photograph or text) or makes a link to an official camp website, the "Camp Policies for Employees Regarding the Internet" takes effect.
- 6) With regard to a camp group page that is started by a staff member, the camp respectfully asks to be informed that such a page is being created and that certain courtesy (and good taste) guidelines be observed. Again, once someone identifies as an employee or utilizes anything the camp has copyrighted, the "Camp Policies for Employees" referred to in point 3 takes effect.
- 7) The official policy of camp is to discourage post-season contact between campers and staff, whether via phone, text message, AIM, e-mail, social networking site or other Internet venue. Camp does not take any responsibility for what may happen as a result of such contact, even if sanctioned by a parent, unless, of course, that contact is part of an official camp-sponsored/camp supervised activity. If a camper initiates such contact, the official camp policy is for the counselor not to respond unless the camper's parent is aware of and approves the contact.
- 8) The camp knows that staff have the right to free expression in their own Internet communications (provided those communications are private and/or do not identify them as an employee of camp), and would only remind them that what they put up for public display will be scrutinized by colleges, universities and potential employers for years to come.

Camp Policy for Employees Regarding Internet Communication

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We know that the Internet, when used wisely, provides many safe and positive ways to stay in touch with your friends from camp. We view Internet venues as your right to self-expression and generally have a favorable regard for them. What you do privately, on your own time, is your business. **Once you identify yourself as a camp employee** in a social networking profile, website, group page or weblog, however; **or use the camp name, logo or any official camp photograph or text**, everything and anything that you post or say in that medium can then be seen as a reflection of camp. That is why we require you, as a condition of employment at camp, to observe the guidelines below. We established these guidelines to assure that camp remains an emotionally and physically safe environment for all staff, employees, campers and families.

- 1) As a camp employee, before I...
 - a. use the camp name or official camp logo or camp photograph;
 - b. add a link from my group page, profile or other site to the camp website;
 - c. include text or photographs that are the property of camp;
 - d. include *photographs of campers* or other staff members;
 - e. or create a camp "group page" with the above items......I must request and receive *prior written approval* from the camp.

- 2) As a camp employee I agree to be respectful of the camp, its program, the campers and its employees in all communications in my e-mails, IMs, profile, blog or other Internet sites. As such, I agree to the following:
 - a. I will not use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language;
 - b. I will not engage in harassment or intimidation;
 - c. I will not post comments that are derogatory with regard to any individual's race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or disability;
 - d. I will not use sexually explicit, suggestive, humiliating or demeaning comments.
 - e. I will not post photographs that compromise anyone's privacy or that is used to demean, humiliate or otherwise embarrass anyone.

- 3) As a camp employee I agree not to use a social networking profile, group page, weblog or other Internet medium to discuss behavior that is prohibited by camp policy, including but not limited to alcohol or drug use, sexual behavior, delinquent behavior, destruction of property, harassment or intimidation.

- 4) I recognize and accept the camp's policy on out-of-camp contact with campers, which is that the camp discourages such contact. Furthermore, I may not share any contact information (including, but not limited to cell phone number, e-mail address, AIM, weblog address or social networking site) with a camper *unless the parents are fully aware of this exchange, give expressed written permission for such contact, and take full responsibility for it*. I understand that the camp takes no responsibility for securing this permission.

- 5) Once I identify myself as a staff member at camp, which is to say as an employee or representative of the camp, the general public may see me as an ambassador or spokesperson of camp. I therefore understand that it is a condition of employment or continued presence in the camp community that I agree to and adhere to the guidelines outlined above. I understand that if any of the guidelines outlined in this measure are violated, it may result in disciplinary and/or legal action including possible termination of my employment/presence at camp.

I have read and understand the above guidelines and agree to their terms.

Staff Signature

Date