

Staff Manual



CAMP PHILOSOPHY

- The goal of Camp Hadar is to provide campers with a safe, enjoyable and rewarding camping experience in a Jewish cultural environment.

Camp Objectives

To help campers feel good about themselves as Jews and to see themselves as an integral part of a larger community of Jewish youth.

Camp Objectives

To help each camper develop self-confidence and a feeling of self worth.

Camp Objectives

To help each camper develop friendships and to learn to cooperate and communicate with others in group situations.

Camp Objectives

To widen the range of interest and experience of each camper, helping each camper to learn new skills and acquire specific skills and/or techniques.

Camp Objectives

To foster in each camper a sense of fair play and good sportsmanship.

Camp Structure

The campers are divided into six units:

- Arava: campers entering pre-kindergarten (at least 4 years old) and kindergarten
- Negev: campers entering first and second grades
- Sharon: campers entering third and fourth grades
- Galil: campers entering fifth and sixth grades
- Teen Leaders: campers entering seventh and eighth grades
- Counselors-In-Training: campers entering ninth and tenth grades

Camp Structure (Continued)

- These groups are named after regions in Israel: Arava located in the southernmost tip of Israel, progressing north to Galil in the north of Israel. Each unit, except Arava, has separate bunks for boys and girls. Arava is a co-ed bunk.
- Depending upon the number of campers enrolled each session, within the unit there may be separate bunks for each grade, or two grades may be combined to create a single bunk.
- Assigned to each bunk are a senior counselor, a junior counselor and possibly a CIT.
- The camp specialist staff includes the Aquatics Director, Lifeguards, Athletics Director, Arts and Crafts Director, Judaic Culture Director, Music Director, Teen Leaders Director, CIT Director, Personnel Director, Assistant Director and Camp Director.

TRANSPORTATION

- All counselors will ride to and from camp on their assigned bus. Specialists may drive to camp or ride the bus. Staff members taking the bus must arrive at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to their assigned time. Any staff member who drives to camp must arrive before 8:30 AM and may not leave camp until the last camper leaves. Staff who drive to camp will be assigned responsibilities in the parking lot and at the basketball court, swing set and flagpole assembly area both AM and PM.
- Campers ride the bus to camp or are transported by their parents. Parents driving campers will arrive before 8:45 or after 9:15 AM, so as not to meet a bus on the narrow road coming out of camp. Pick-up is at 4:10.
- Parents who bring their children to camp late (after 9:30) must first bring the camper to the office to sign in.
- Counselors are requested to check that all late-arriving campers have checked in at the office. Any parent wishing to pick up their child early **must** (a) send a note to camp or (b) call the camp.

TRANSPORTATION (Continued)

- Counselors may be asked to accompany a camper to the office a few minutes before parents are scheduled to arrive or someone from the office may come get the camper.
- **Counselors should never dismiss a camper directly to a parent or other person.** Direct the parent to the office to follow the appropriate sign out procedures. Counselors must make sure that no campers leave the camp without first checking out in the office.
- Irregular situations such as campers going home on a different bus or campers getting dropped off at a different stop **must** be verified in writing or by phone. **Under no circumstances will a camper be allowed to alter his/her regular transportation arrangement without prior notice from a parent.**
- If a camper tells a staff member that s/he is going home following a different arrangement, but has no note from a parent, please let the office know so we can contact a parent and clarify the issue.

Transportation (Continued)

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Camp Bus

- Everyone shall be seated in a proper seat (no one seated in aisles, on someone's lap, etc.) and remain seated at all times during the trip.
- Keep all hands, arms, etc. inside the bus.
- No tossing objects out of windows. No yelling out windows.
- Keep noise to a minimum as it may distract the driver.
- Do not open the back "emergency exit" door.
- No horseplay on the bus.
- No food or drink consumed on the bus.

Bus Counselor and Staff Responsibilities

- The bus counselor should sit at the front of the bus and step off each time a camper enters bus. All problems regarding bus routines or scheduling should be referred to the camp office.
- Behavior problems should be reported to the director immediately. Bus counselors are paid a stipend for responsibility. If the B.C. is absent, s/he must designate someone else to take his/her place.
- The telephone number is on the bus schedule that is distributed to all campers with instructions to call between 7:30 and 7:45 if the camper will not be riding the bus that day.
- Staff who ride the bus should notify the B.C. if they will not be on the bus.
- All other staff who ride the bus also share the above responsibilities. The staff should be interspersed throughout the bus helping to keep order and when possible organizing activities and singing for campers. If the bus counselor is not on the bus, all other counselors assume full responsibility.

Afternoon Bus Ride

- After the bunks are cleaned and campers gather their belongings, counselors will bring their bunks to the flagpole.
- During afternoon flagpole ALL campers will sit by bus and will be assigned to a “bus group” led by a staff member. Staff will sit with their assigned “bus group”.
- The staff assigned to their “bus group” will take attendance and report the number of campers to the bus counselor.
- The Camp Director will dismiss busses when attendance has been completed and the campers are quiet.
- The bus counselors will proceed to the bus and the “bus groups” led by their staff member will follow. The B.C. will take attendance a 2nd time and will then allow the “bus group” to enter the bus.
- No one is allowed to leave camp until attendance is taken on every bus and all campers are accounted for and on the proper bus.
- Buses are dismissed one at a time at 4:00.

Bus Emergencies

In the event of any emergency, staff members have the responsibility of taking care of the campers. If the operator of the vehicle needs assistance, s/he will ask for it. Otherwise, follow these basic rules:

- If the weather and location permit, allow the campers to sit outside of the bus, well off the shoulder of the road. Keep the group together. Make frequent attendance checks to assure that all are present. Organize group games to pass the time.
- If the weather and location does not permit, campers must remain in the bus. Organize group games to pass the time.
- 3. The bus operator or the bus counselor will call the Camp Director immediately in the event of accident, mechanical failure or other delay.

Food Allergies

- **Dealing with food allergies:** Staff will be notified by an office member if a camper with a food allergy is enrolled in camp.
- If a camper has a food allergy (e.g., peanuts, tuna fish, etc.), a sterile eating environment must be maintained by the nurse.
- After eating, campers' hands must be washed with soap and water for twenty seconds when a camper with a food allergy is present.

Counselor Responsibilities:

- Counselors will get their campers to lunch on time and get the lunch bag.
- Counselors will make sure campers do not begin eating before haMotzi and do not share food.
- Counselors will supervise cleanup. All trash must be put in the empty trash bag. The garbage will be taken to the camp dumpster.
- There should be no papers or food on or around the table.

Rainy Day Activities

- During a rainy day, we will run a NORMAL schedule. All specialist activities will remain in effect, but will move to an indoor site.
- Please make sure that you are prepared for inclement weather, as you will be required to travel outside between activities.
- Counselors are responsible for planning quiet activities in their own cabins for any scheduled free period.
- Rainy days can be quite difficult, especially if the weather changes quickly or rains for several days in a row.
- We try not to declare a rainy day schedule unless it appears it will rain most of the day.
- During a sprinkle, we try to wait it out and follow the regular schedule outdoors.
- During a sudden thunderstorm, the camper should be brought to shelter immediately and counselors should wait for instructions for the rest of the day.

Rainy Day Specialist Responsibilities

- In the event of heavy rain, if you are leading an outdoor activity, make sure all the campers are safely sheltered in a building. Be in contact with the office for instructions.
- Have activities planned in advance to be used for large groups inside during rainy days.
- If you are not scheduled to be with a bunk during a period of a rainy day schedule, please come to the office and you may be assigned to other activities.

Rainy Day Counselor Responsibilities

- In the event of heavy rain, if you are leading an outdoor activity, make sure all campers are safely sheltered in a building. Be in contact with the office for instructions.
- Have several activities for your bunk planned in advance. The office has some games and books with rainy day ideas. Brainstorm with other counselors during orientation. Share your successful ideas!

After Camp Activities

FAMILY NIGHTS

- Family Nights are held during the 2nd and 3rd sessions for all campers. This is a voluntary activity for campers and their families. Those campers who do not participate go home on the bus. Parents are invited to the camp and usually arrive by about 5:00 PM.

The typical schedule of activities may look like this:

- **4:00 – 4:45** Campers and staff will set up for Family Night activities and clean the camp.
- **4:45 – 5:30** At about 4:45, any children whose parents have not yet arrived will remain with the staff for supervision. Campers often feel upset if their parents arrive later than other campers' parents. Parents must supervise their children. Campers will also take their parents on tours of the camp. All specialists are available to meet with parents, as well as counselors who are not with campers still waiting for parents.
- **5:30 – 7:00** Campers, parents and staff go to the picnic area to purchase their dinner. The camp will provide a cookout to all families who have ordered dinner. Families who do not wish to participate in the cookout may provide their own pareve or meat dinner. Staff may eat together, but should spend some time mingling and always make themselves available to speak with parents. Bunks run Camp Carnival or Color War activities as planned.
- **7:00** Family Night ends.

Family Night

Counselor Responsibilities

- All counselors are required to stay for Family Nights.
- Distribute permission slips (from office) to campers, collect signed slips from campers and turn them into the office promptly. Often campers need to be asked whether they have notes for the office. Don't assume they'll remember to give them to you. Encourage campers to attend family night.
- On Family Night, supervise your campers until their parents arrive and participate in any activities organized for the campers during the afternoon. Greet parents of your campers when they arrive.
- After eating, you must circulate during dinner to speak to your campers' parents, if you have not already done so. Have something nice to say or an anecdote to recount to each parent. Remember that you are representing the camp to parents.

Family Night Specialist Responsibilities

- All specialists are required to stay for family nights.
- During group activities, assist in the supervision of campers. Be available to parents to answer questions. Display campers' work (if applicable) and/or organize simple activities for campers and their parents.
- Greet parents and circulate during dinner.

Overnights

- Overnights are a voluntary activity for campers in the Sharon, Galil, Teen Leaders, and CIT units. They take place on the same evenings as the Family Nights. Campers and staff are provided with evening snack, and breakfast and lunch on the following day.
- No camper can stay without parental permission.

Overnights

Counselor Responsibilities

- Attendance is mandatory for overnights if your bunk is participating in the overnight. Counselors whose bunks are not participating may stay up through the camp fire only with the permission of the Director and if permitted to stay, must assume the same responsibilities as those counselors whose bunks are participating.
- Counselors must remain with their campers at all times. They are required to participate in all activities and assist campers where and when needed.
- Be alert for homesick campers. They will need your help and support. Notify the director or other responsible person if necessary.
- During the campfire, counselors will sit with their campers. Counselors may be asked to plan in advance skits, songs, etc. for the overnight.
- At bed time, counselors will bring their campers to the bathroom, help them arrange their bedding and attend to each camper as necessary.
- Once all the campers are in bed, at the director's discretion the counselors may be given some free time. (Sometimes a staff meeting may also be scheduled). **No alcoholic beverages, drugs or inappropriate behavior will be tolerated. Violators are subject to immediate dismissal.** Counselors must return to the Moadon to be with the campers when requested to do so.
- Staff will help with the night watch. On-duty staff will remain awake in the Moadon, accompany any campers to the bathroom to insure the safety and well being of the campers. Two staff members will be on duty at a time, usually for one to two hours.
- Staff are expected to sleep in the same area as the campers. They may not leave the campers unattended.

Parental Contact

The administration believes that contact with parents is vital for a successful summer. The process begins with the camper application. Through a series of questions, we are able to learn a great deal about individual camper's needs. Before the start of a session, counselors will receive a summary of important information about their campers, any concerns their parents have, special needs, etc. In order to continue to promote good communication, the camp has created several other methods and opportunities to talk with parents. These include open house, family nights, parent/camper lunch, camper phone calls, end of session camper notes, camp website, and an end-of-the-session newsletter.

Parental Contact (Continued)

OPEN HOUSE

- On the Sunday before the first day of camp, all registered campers and their parents are invited to visit the camp between the hours of 11:00 and 1:00 PM. This gives the campers and their parents a chance to meet the staff and see the facilities.
- Welcome signs with campers' names should be prominently displayed. Counselors are expected to stay around their flagpole during the entire open house. Specialists and other personnel are also required to be at camp and will be assigned duties for the afternoon.

FAMILY NIGHTS

PARENT/CAMPER LUNCH

- Parents will join their campers for lunch where they may order pizza or bring their own dairy lunch. In the afternoon the parents will watch a special performance by the bunks and join their campers for a swim.

PARENT VISITATION

- All visitors must sign in at the office and then are accompanied around the camp by a staff member. For the campers' safety, no one is allowed to walk around the camp unescorted. Staff should question any stranger on the premises and bring the person to the office immediately.

Parental Contact (Continued)

CAMP NEWSLETTER

- In order to enhance our communication with parents, the camp will put out a newsletter at the conclusion of each session. The newsletter will contain general camp news as well as news of activities and individual bunks. The office staff will write the general news and specialists will submit news of their activities.
- Specialists will type their articles for the newsletter by Wednesday of the second week of each session.

CAMPER LETTERS

- In addition, once each session counselors are required to write a personal note to parents on how each specific camper is doing. Issues that parents will want to be informed about are camper's relationships with other campers, liked and disliked activities, camper's happiness, etc. If there is a serious problem with a camper, a counselor should not wait for the newsletter, but discuss the problem with the Camp Director so parents can be notified immediately. Please don't try to analyze a camper's behavior. Keep observations clear and simple. The note need not be longer than a few lines. Co-counselors will share equally the writing of camper letters. The camper letters are due in the office the second Wednesday of each session.

PHONE CALLS TO PARENTS

- Senior Counselors will call all their campers prior to each session. Counselors will be given a list of campers on the Wednesday prior to the start of a new session.
- Please call each camper and introduce yourself to the parents, confirm their bus routes and status of all camp forms and let the campers know where to find you in the morning when their bus arrives at camp. Let the parents know that you look forward to a great session and if they have any questions or concerns, to feel free to send a note to camp or call the camp office.

CAMP HADAR EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- **Code Red: Fire Emergency**
- **Code White: Medical Emergency**
- **Code A: Missing Camper**
- **Code Black: Potential or Impending Safety Risk**

Missing Camper

- If a staff member has any reason to believe that a camper is missing, **do not wait!** Report it to the Camp Director or Assistant Director immediately.
- **CODE A** will be announced. **The announcement will be repeated 3 times both over the loudspeaker and 2 way radios.**
- All certified lifeguards will report immediately to the waterfront for bottom search. ALL other staff are to bring their campers quickly to the Moadon. The Specialists will immediately begin a preliminary search of camp per their assignment. Sr. Counselors will report immediately to the Nurse's office steps to receive instructions. The Jr. Counselors will take attendance and will confirm attendance with the CIT Director. After attendance is confirmed, the Jr. Counselors will report immediately to the Nurse's office steps to join the Sr. Counselors for instructions. CITs should remain with their campers.

Missing Camper (Continued)

- The CIT Director and the CITs will see to it that all campers are seated by bunk. To reassure the campers, the CITs should direct singing and quiet games to pass the time.
- The Camp Director will make the decision to notify authorities if necessary, as well as the parents of the missing camper.
- When 911 is called, the Athletics Director will be sent to the entrance of the driveway on Hooker Farm Rd. to guide the emergency vehicle into camp **AND** to insure that **NO NON-EMERGENCY VEHICLES** or **PERSONNEL** enter or leave the camp property. If any **non-emergency** vehicles or personnel attempt to enter or leave the camp property, the Camp Director **MUST** be called **IMMEDIATELY**.
- The entire group will remain in the Moadon until the Camp Director OR his/her Designee gives the "All Clear Signal".

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE AT THE WATERFRONT

- Signal for emergency is three whistle blasts and clear the water immediately.
- The Waterfront Director will call either Code A or Code White (if Code White, 911 immediately called) over the 2-way radios.
- Staff in the water will help campers to move out quickly and sit quietly on the sand by bunk.
- Counselors take attendance and will confirm attendance with the Assistant Director. Once attendance is confirmed, the Assistant Director will direct the bunk to the basketball court.
- Lifeguards begin bottom search while other counselors check around docks and weeds.
- Three Counselors or CITs, to be assigned by the Waterfront Director, are immediately dispatched to check surrounding areas including bathrooms, office/infirmery and the missing camper's cabin.
- If the camper is still missing, 911 is called and a camp wide Code A will be announced. (See Missing Camper procedure above.)

FIRE EMERGENCY

- If you spot a fire, notify the office immediately. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD SOMEONE ENTER A BURNING BUILDING OR AREA.**
- The Camp Director or Assistant Director will immediately call 911.
- The Camp Director or his/her Designee will notify the camp by announcing **Code Red_Location of the Fire_Please Report to.... (The announcement will be repeated 3 times both over the loudspeaker and 2 way radios).**
- Specialists will report to their assigned areas.
- The Sr. Counselors will take attendance and will confirm attendance with the CIT Director.
- The CIT Director and Counselors will see to it that all campers are seated by bunk. To reassure the campers, the CIT Director and Counselors should direct singing and quiet games to pass the time.
- The entire group will remain in the safety area until the Camp Director OR his/her Designee gives the "All Clear Signal".

CHILD ABUSE

(MENTAL, PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL)

Any staff member who has reason to believe that any child they encounter is the victim of any form of child abuse must report it immediately to the camp director. Any staff member suspected to be involved in any form of abuse as a result of their direct or indirect actions would be subject to immediate suspension until state and local authorities have determined the nature and result of said abuse.

PREVENTING ABUSE AND ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

Camp staff can reduce their exposure to abuse allegations by observing the following guidelines:

- Physical Abuse: Aside from the obvious rules of no hitting, slapping, kicking, arm twisting or other forms of physical violence in lieu of appropriate forms of discipline, staff should refrain from grabbing, wrestling, headlocks or any type of physical contact that inflicts pain intentionally or unintentionally.
- Mental Abuse: In speaking with campers, staff should avoid put-downs, abusive language or references to campers' abilities or lack of. Avoid punishment that belittles or embarrasses campers either in front of staff or campers.
- Sexual Abuse: All staff must constantly be on guard about their behavior and language (references to subjects that may have sexual overtones, especially when helping children change clothes, helping in the bathroom, etc.). To minimize the risk of abuse allegations, **no staff member or CIT should ever be alone with a camper.**
- When a counselor or CIT is assigned to work with campers of the opposite sex, s/he is not allowed to enter the cabin during changing time, but must remain outside, away from the cabin. Staff need also supervise carefully both coed and single sex groups of campers.

PREVENTING ABUSE AND ABUSE ALLEGATIONS STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- Staff are, by law and job description, caretaker of children. This creates a clear power difference between that staff member and the campers. Inappropriate sexual contact, physical, psychological or emotional abuse have the potential to generate deep effects on the psyche of that camper that could last a lifetime. Therefore the staff member must choose carefully both words and actions, seeking always to respect the personhood of the camper.
- **The Counselor becomes a "mandated reporter" of suspected abuse of children, bound by law to immediate report allegations or suspicion of abuse.**
- The law exists for the protection of children. It is the responsibility of Child Welfare experts to determine the validity of any allegations.
- In the camp setting staff make their report to the Camp Director. The Camp Director is mandated to make immediate report to proper State authorities.
- Failure to report is a punishable offense.

EVALUATIONS

Every staff member is evaluated at camp. Staff members are evaluated by the supervisory staff and also by themselves.

Evaluation by Supervisory Staff

- Twice during the summer, at the end of the first month of camp and at the end of the summer, counselors will meet with the director or other supervisory staff to discuss the counselor's written evaluation.
- Counselors may also be asked to fill out an evaluation form themselves. Strengths and weaknesses will be discussed with suggestions for improvement if needed.
- Evaluations will be signed by the counselor and kept on file in the office.
- Evaluations will be used for hiring purposes the following summer and for references.
- In addition, specialists are asked to complete an evaluation of counselor's behavior, attitude etc. during their specialties at the end of the summer.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

It is the responsibility of the Camp Director to discipline any staff member who fails to adhere to established rules and regulations of health and safety.

- Identification or observance of violation
- Verbal warning from Camp Director and logging in personnel file
- Job dismissal if deemed appropriate by Camp Director

STAFF POLICIES

PERSONAL BUSINESS

- All personal business must be taken care of outside of camp hours. During the camp season, Camp Hadar expects that your staff position will be considered your primary job. While Camp Hadar does not prohibit outside employment, it is the staff member's responsibility to insure that outside activities do not interfere with the camp day.

CAMP TELEPHONE

- The camp phone is for business use only and may not be used for personal business. In the event of an emergency, the camp director may grant permission for phone use.

ILLNESS

- In the unlikely event of illness that would prevent you from working, the Camp Director should be contacted immediately. Please attempt to call as early as possible so plans may be made for your absence. Camp Hadar does not compensate for time missed due to illness.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

- As an employee of Camp Hadar, you are covered under a workmen's compensation insurance policy. This insurance only covers you when you are at camp and on job related business.

SMOKING POLICY

- There will be NO SMOKING at Camp Hadar PERIOD! This will include smokeless tobacco.

STAFF POLICIES (Continued)

ALCOHOL/ILLEGAL DRUGS

- Regardless of personal views on the use of alcohol or drugs of any kinds, at no time will they be tolerated during camp or during any camp-sponsored activity or daily event. Anyone caught with alcohol/illegal drug will be dismissed of his or her job.

GUESTS AT CAMP

- Guests of counselors are not allowed without the advance approval of the Camp Director. Any stranger who enters camp must be approached immediately and asked if they may be helped.

CAMP STAFF DRESS CODE

- Staff are expected to arrive at camp each day dressed in neat fashion. Torn-clothing, T-shirts with suggestive labels, revealing or tight clothes, etc. are not part of the camp atmosphere and will not be allowed. Shoes of some type must be worn at all times.

APPEARANCE STATEMENT

- The camp recognizes the rights of individuals in their dress and appearance, but reserves the right to require a staff person to compromise on dress and appearance when the health, safety and role modeling to campers are involved.
- Staff is expected to dress comfortably and professionally in sportswear. Staff shirts are to be worn on 1st session days and on Family Night functions with campers and on special trips.
- Nose rings/studs, lip rings, tongue posts/studs, visible body rings/studs are not to be worn while at camp unless approval is first obtained from the Camp Director. As usual, the wearing of any type of jewelry and piercing at the waterfront is not recommended.

STAFF POLICIES (Continued)

TIPS AND GRATUITIES

- Camp Hadar forbids the acceptance of tips/gratuities. If a parent offers you a gratuity, you may suggest a donation to the Camper Scholarship Fund in your honor as an alternative.

REMUNERATION

- Staff will be paid on a bi-weekly basis in accordance with the Merrimack Valley Jewish Federation payroll schedule. Paychecks will be available at the camp office the second Friday of each session AND the last day of staff during session 4.
- Staff is paid per diem. Any time missed is reflected in the final paycheck of the camp season.

STAFF TERMINATION

- In the event that a staff person is terminated from employment, an evaluation session will be held with both employer and employee to discuss the nature of the termination, citing specific reasons for said termination.