

# Responding to COVID-19 at Camp

In this time of uncertainty, we at Redwoods have been challenging ourselves to brainstorm what we can do moving forward in our new state of operation. Camps also have the opportunity in front of them to help fill the gap (and time) that many families may be feeling at the moment. It is important to take advantage of having dynamic, creative and IT savvy staff who can contribute amazing ideas during this time. Below is some guidance on how your camp can continue to serve the community, communicate with parents and update their policies and procedures.

## Serving Your Camp Community, Regardless—Use Your Mission as Your Guide

- **TikTok & Social Media:** With the emerging world of TikTok, utilize staff to set up an account for your program. Share short videos of what you and/or camp staff are up to at camp. This is a great way to connect with your camp community.
- **Facebook Live & Other Live Stream Platforms:** We have already seen camps doing the following on these platforms:
  - Live stream an activity from camp—a nature program or a favorite camp activity/tradition. Engage campers at home so that they can follow along.
  - 20-30 minute read-aloud book time/story time. Having a staff person read stories or tell a camp story at a set time each night is a great way to connect with campers. It also allows parents/guardians to take a break.
- **Digital Equity:** Not all campers and families will be able to get online as easily as others. Consider sending out some snail mail to your community to connect. Include color your own camp maps, camp word searches or other fun activities to connect campers to your camp and create tangible activities for campers to do while they are home.
- **Email or Post Regular Activities for Kids:** Coloring pages, essay contests, word searches, math games or book clubs are all potential activities you could post. Encourage kids to share their projects.

When setting up these social media pages, make sure someone is monitoring them regularly. Additionally, make sure all mail is going to one central mailbox. These are both best practices for preventing abuse and making sure that staff are not having inappropriate contact with campers.

## Thinking Ahead to Summer—Messaging to Reassure Parents

- **Continue to Hire for Summer:** Plan as though camp will continue to happen without any disruption. While our summer may not look like past years, we hope to have the opportunity to deliver programs. Consider **consulting with your legal counsel** to include some sort of statement in your summer employment contracts along the lines of the following:
  - *[Camp/organization] reserves the right to terminate contracts on one week's notice, should extenuating circumstances such as epidemics, fire, weather or lack of enrollment force the camp(s) to close, and/or causes a reduction in services. Employees are expected to honor their Agreements for the period of time stated therein.*
- **Continue Communication Plans with Parents/Guardians:** This summer, more than ever, parents & guardians are going to want to know what your health screening and health management protocols are. Be sure all staff are able to share the following with parents/guardians:
  - How campers and staff are screened during their initial arrival at camp—and by whom
  - Your sick camper policy and how that is handled. (Will campers be kept at camp? Sent home? This will vary from camp to camp, depending on your camper population.)
  - What and when families will receive communication regarding a camper's health at camp
  - Continued health management while at camp—especially for camps that are more than two weeks, how often is there a scheduled check-in with the camp's health care team?

- Who makes up your camp health care team

### Update Policies & Procedures Now—Plan How to Train Staff on Updates

- **Communicable Disease Plan:** Work with your healthcare team to update your Communicable Disease Plan. The Association of Camp Nursing has [great resources on best practices and how to implement](#) this at your camp.
- **Handwashing:** This is a great time to evaluate how well your handwashing plans at camp are *really* working. This may be the year to up your game on how staff are trained, whether or not you have enough handwashing facilities and whether or not you have adequate supplies. ACA developed a great resource on [how to make handwashing really effective](#).
- **Health Screening:** Do any updates need to be made to your health screening process, based on what we have learned about COVID-19? Many camps are adding temperature checks as a part of the check in process, and not something that is checked later within the first 24-hours. Take time to consider how campers will be screened, and what your response will be in the event of fever or other signs of illness upon check-in.
- **Sick Camper/Staff Policy:** Working with your healthcare team, revisit your sick camper and sick staff policy. Do you need to update your quarantine space? Will you send campers home? Keep them at camp? How will you manage this? What about if the camper is on a wilderness trip?