

Camp Administration

Planning the Effective Camp¹

Quality leadership and administration are critical for the success of camping and all outdoor ministries. The information on the following pages is just the beginning. We recommend *team leadership* that allows a broad base for creative ideas and past camping experience, decision-making, involvement in camp leadership, and administration.

1. **Determine and know your purpose:** The objectives of the event should be written down and shared with the entire staff. Filter all planned activities and events through the purpose and ask the question: “How does this help further the purpose of the camp/reunion/retreat?”
2. **Promote your event:** In today’s multimedia world, it takes several attempts at communicating to get the message through to those who need to hear it. Convey the purpose of the event clearly. Include important dates and fees, a list of program activities, and a schedule. Encourage participants to invite their friends. Include financial incentives for bringing friends if possible.
3. **Recruit and train camp staff:** Staff should be recruited early and included in the planning meetings as soon as possible. Orientation, training, and motivation should be part of the preparation. Job descriptions should be provided for each staff member, both volunteer and paid positions. Be up front with staff about expectations and commitment. Quality camps/reunions/retreats take good planning and community building which is accomplished through pre-camp meetings and training sessions. Of critical importance is to check that all staff members are *Registered Youth Workers* through the “Protecting Our Children” program. Training events include: the annual Skills and Leadership Training event each Spring; the annual Director’s retreat each Fall; as well as other training events sponsored by the Ontario Camping Association.
4. **Plan an exciting program:** Camp for children and youth, as well as for adults at reunions, actually begins before they arrive. Use excitement and adventure as part of your pre-camp promotion and during pre-registration events. At camp, each part of the program should reflect the overall goals and purpose. Guest ministers, speakers, musicians, and others should be given a copy of the camp’s purpose and objectives, with information about the current event (camp size, theme, age group, other) before their participation.
5. **Select the location:** In most cases, the location will be at a church-owned facility. When selecting a location, keep in mind the needs of the campers first: safety, spiritual formation, and physical activity. Visit the site before selecting it, or at least before camp to understand the layout, to visualize where activities can be held, and to note any hazardous areas. Review rental agreements or contracts at staff meetings and orientations. Food is a very important part of the experience, be sure to discuss it with staff provided by the campgrounds or by your staff, considering what facilities are available for preparation of meals. If possible, have your entire staff visit the facility prior to the event. This allows for everyone to understand the grounds and will help when it’s time to settle in.

¹ Adapted from *Camp Helps*, produced by *Community of Christ*, 2002. Revised 2007.

6. **Set the price:** Registration fees should provide enough revenue to cover the expenses of the event plus a contingency fund. Be prepared to offer honorariums or cover travel expenses for guest ministry, speakers, or artists. Review policies or contracts that include amounts, travel expenses, and accommodations for their family or associates. Be sure to think through a cancellation policy. Have a plan in the event it is necessary to cancel camp, and include this in publicity and registration information. Rather than reducing fees, you may choose to offset costs through camper-ships. Many congregations now consider camping as a part of their ministry and include all or part of each camper's fees in their budget. Consult with appropriate jurisdictional financial officers regarding all camp fees and budgets.
7. **Evaluation and follow-up:** Create an evaluation form to capture feedback from participants and staff. To help with subsequent events, prepare a written report including these evaluations, staff and participant lists, and budget information about the camp. A copy of all of this information should be kept on file at the Canada East Mission office.

Camping, reunions, and retreats represent a great opportunity for children, youth and adults to develop a deeper spiritual understanding. Encourage participants to connect with their local congregations and share their stories about camp during a worship service.

Expectations for Staff Members²

1. The entire range of camping activities, i.e. youth camps, reunions, family camps, youth retreats, canoe camps, etc. are part of the World Church camping ministries. As such World Church provides:
 - a. Integrated thematic resources for all age groups for camps and reunions
 - b. A set of minimum standards for camp staff competency
 - c. A framework for staff registration and protection of our youth
 - d. Comprehensive insurance coverage, and
 - e. Risk management guidelines to jurisdictions that wish to sponsor camps, reunions and/or retreats.
2. The primary goal for camps, reunions and retreats is to provide opportunities for participants to have a personal and collective experience with the Divine in an environment that is safe and secure.
3. These events depend upon the willingness of volunteers to give of their time and energy.
 - a. This service however is not automatic but is based on an individual's qualifications as well as their desire.
 - b. All staff, whether volunteer or full-time, are expected to:
 - i. Hold the camper's welfare paramount and be willing to work with the other staff to achieve this end.
 - ii. Register as a Registered Youth Worker prior to the event at which they serve.
 - iii. Avail themselves of annual training opportunities provided by Canada East Mission (CEM), and/or by other organizations within the field of camping and youth ministries, such as the Ontario Camping Association, or Youth Specialties. Each year the CEM sponsors the:
 1. Skills and Leadership Training event in the Spring
 2. Director's retreat in the Fall
 - iv. Integrate new skills and resources with thematic resources developed by World Church.
 - v. Participate with other staff in the development of an effective ministry team.
4. An ad hoc camping/reunion/retreat committee meets periodically to discuss issues pertinent to this type of ministry. All persons interested in outdoor ministries are invited to attend and participate in these meetings. Dates and times are announced in advance.

² These *Expectations for Staff Members* were developed out of the discussions of the ad hoc camping committee in conjunction with input from the Canada East Mission staff. Updated and revised October 23, 2007 by Ken Barrows.

General Staff Responsibilities³

Camp, Reunion or Retreat Director

The Revised Regulations of Ontario (R.R.O.) stipulate “Every operator shall ensure that the campers in each camp are under the continuous supervision of an adult who has experience in administration and leadership in a recreational camp. (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 568, s. 6.)

The Ontario Camping Association (OCA) recommends that directors have at least 8-10 years experience beyond that of general staff. In addition to that, OCA recommends that they have between 4-5 years of senior supervisory level experience within the camp setting. (‘Residential Guidelines-Leadership,’ *Ontario Camping Association: Guidelines for Accreditation*. Ontario Camping Association, April 2006. pp. 28-29)

The Alberta Camping Association (ACA) stipulates that directors of residential camps be at least 24 years of age with several years of supervisory experience plus a minimum of 3 years “of appropriate experience in the field of directing a camp’s administrative and management program. (*ACA Camping Standards*, Alberta Camping Association, pp. 19)

The *Community of Christ* stipulates that a Registered Youth Worker must be at least 21 years of age.

Based on the above parameters an event director should be at least 24 years of age with 4-5 years of supervisory level experience within the camp setting.

The director should:

- possess emotional and spiritual maturity.
- be a living example of his or her faith,
- be a skilled leader and have a positive influence on both camp staff and campers.
- demonstrate the ability to promote and plan for ongoing staff training
- be sensitive and committed toward the physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs of the campers
- be organized, enthusiastic, personable, and knowledgeable about camp policies and must be willing to support them
- be aware of the mission and purpose of *Community of Christ* as it is lived out within the congregation and across the world and be able to bridge from that into the camp experience
- be a Registered Youth Worker

³ Adapted from *Camp Helps* produced by *Community of Christ* 2002. Revised October 23, 2007 by Ken Barrows

Business Manager/ Registrar

The business manager is responsible for the keeping of accurate financial records, paying bills, purchasing, and receiving funds. The business manager should work closely and under the direction of the camp director. The business manager works with the director to prepare a camp budget prior to the event. Afterwards, they are responsible to see that the financial records are completed and submitted to the Canada East Mission office in conjunction with the parameters on page 13, "Information Flow between Directors and Mission Office". Please refer to the "Budget Preparation & Reporting" section.

Cooks

Camp cooks should have knowledge of quality and quantity cooking. They should balance being sensitive to the eating habits of young people with proper nutrition. They should work under the direction of the camp director.

Camp Medical Staff

Camps must be staffed with proper medical personnel. Under current *Community of Christ* standards the order of preference for medical staff would be: **medical doctor** (responsible to supply their own insurance), **nurse practitioner, registered nurse (RN), licensed practical nurse (LPN), paramedic, emergency medical technician (EMT) or Ontario licensed First Aide Responder** (a person who is a holder of a **Canadian Red Cross Society's Standard First Aid Certificate** or a **St. John's Ambulance Association's Standard First Aid Certificate**). Medical staff should provide assistance during camper check in and pre-screen applications for health related information that would impact camp management. In addition they assist the director in developing an emergency response plan should the nature of the incident exceed the capability of the medical staff on site. In other words, locate the nearest medical facility and establish with them what emergency response procedures need to be.

Counselling Staff comprised of Camp Counsellors and Assistant Camp Counsellors

Camp Counsellors:

Camp Counsellors are adults who are assigned throughout the length of a camping period to live with a group of campers, and supervise their daily program activities. They must be 21 years of age and a Registered Youth worker. Their responsibilities include:

- the creation of a positive cabin community
- monitoring attendance
- physical health including eating and drinking habits, and spiritual development
- leading campers in cabin activities that might include scripture study, devotions, and KP or cleaning duties.

Assistant Camp Counsellors and/or Counsellors-in-Training (CIT) or Leaders-in-Training (LIT)

Assistant Camp Counsellors must

- be a minimum of fifteen (15) years old.
- must be a minimum of two (2) years older than the campers they supervise
- be under the direct supervision of a camp counsellor, especially during overnight or on trips or outings, and
- be registered as a Registered Youth Worker with *Community of Christ*.

In the situation where a person 15 to 20 years old is working in camp roles other than Cabin Counselling then the 2-year age gap does not apply. They must however be under the direct supervision of the camp director or camp counsellor and be registered as a Registered Youth Worker. All Assistant Camp Counsellors should be engaged in a training program either at camp or prior to camp each season they serve on staff.

Pastoral Team

The pastoral team should serve as the spiritual leaders and offer pastoral care to campers and staff. They need to be willing organize and conduct worship and religious educational activities consistent with the vision of the church and in harmony with the objectives of the camp. They should be highly visible at all camp activities and are responsible to the camp director. They must be Registered Youth Workers.

Waterfront (Lifeguards)

Swimming pool and natural waterway activities, even at public facilities, must be under the supervision of properly trained and certified water safety personnel.

- The Waterfront Director must be at least 18 years old and hold a current certificate
- Waterfront supervisors must be at least 16 years of age and hold a current certificate
- The number of waterfront supervisors is as follows:
 - 1-25 campers in the water: 2 supervisors are required by law
 - 26-100 campers in the water: 3 supervisors are required by law

Sample Job Description for a Reunion Director⁴

Position Summary

Reunion provides a spiritual experience by building a Christ-centered community of all ages of members and friends within *Community of Christ*. The reunion director creates a program which provides campers with opportunity to explore their faith through worship, educational classes, discussions, everyday community living, fun activities, etc. Director of family camp oversees and coordinates all the planning for the one-week event. This person does not do all of the tasks him/herself, but must be sure that each segment is achieved successfully in line with the overall objective. The Director must ensure a safe environment and program for all.

Responsibilities

He/she must identify, explore, and create opportunities for *Community of Christ* and friends to come together for a **positive spiritual experience through the creation of a close bond of community** among the participants while living together for an extended period of time, sharing physical resources, living space, meals, personnel, time, etc. The experience of community teaches campers Christ-like qualities which can be incorporated in their daily life such as unselfish loving, honest sharing, practical serving, sacrificial giving, sympathetic comforting, etc. The program must provide participants with circumstances to renew, sustain, or challenge their faith through worship, community experience, educational opportunities, fun, recreation, fellowship, etc. At times differences arise at camp. Therefore, skills in dealing with conflict resolution are an asset.

The director **sets the vision, focus, and orientation** of the camp by identifying, exploring, and creating opportunities for the faith community to come together for a positive spiritual experience. Objectives of the camp must be written down and communicated in advance of camp with campers and the entire staff including guest ministers, speakers, musicians, cooks, and others. The important communication assists staff and participants to choose a camp where their gifts, talents, and needs are aligned with the goals of the camp and helps to create a successful experience for all involved. All planned activities and events are filtered through the objectives and answer the question, "How does this help further the purpose of the camp?" The director is encouraged to link resources and themes from headquarters to the objectives of his/her reunion or may choose other themes and resources as appropriate for the focus of the camp.

S/he **facilitates the project planning** while envisioning ways and means to meet the objectives. This includes staffing, scheduling, resourcing, budget planning, health and safety issues, legal issues, etc. Using key staff members to assist with the planning and implementation of the program is crucial considering the scope of the project. The director requires good leadership including decision making abilities, creating a team of staff members, delegating, administration, advance planning, communication, flexibility, goal

⁴ Revised October 26, 2007 by Ken Barrows

setting, etc. The director must know the needs of the clientele. Appropriate time lines must be set. Tasks are delegated with job descriptions. The director sets a budget in conjunction with the planning team and in particular, with the business manager. A communication strategy must be established for advanced advertising and to facilitate needs during the camp. As manager of the event, he/she should not have responsibilities over and above managing the event. The director is fully present in order to be aware of unfolding needs and flexible to respond appropriately within the vision and objectives set. Adequate staffing is vital for the success of camp especially concerning such issues as food handling, children's activities, or swimming. The entire program or parts of the program may be cancelled if not satisfactorily supervised or staffed.

As administrator of the camp, the director is **accountable to the government of Ontario, the campground board, Canada East Mission staff, and to *Community of Christ* headquarters.** The director must acknowledge receipt and understanding of all policies and procedures (including "Recreational Camps Regulation #568 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990") and make known their willingness to comply. All policies and procedures set by Ontario government, the campground board, Canada East Mission, or World Church must be adhered to and communicated to staff and participants as appropriate. Legal consequences may be the result of any negligence. This includes the need to ensure proper licenses for copyrighted material used at camp such as music or films.

Evaluation of the experience is important to ensure appropriate lessons are learned for building excellent future family camp opportunities. The director captures relevant data about what works and why; or what doesn't work and why. S/he searches out honest feedback from staff and participants.

The director is **expected to attend two training events each year**—the Directors' Retreat and Skills and Leadership Training Event. They are also expected to make training an important expectation for their staff. Training events provide opportunities for all staff to be come aware of policies, procedures, resources, etc. as well as provide a greater pool of resources and creative ideas that are useful for the planning of camp by networking with other camp staff.

Duties

The director is responsible for administering the following duties as appropriate for the family camp:

- Create vision and mission of the reunion
- Coordinate the schedule of events
- Contact guest minister(s) to clarify role, responsibilities, special needs, travel arrangements, expenses, accommodations, etc.
- Form balanced budget, set registration fees adequate to provide enough revenue to cover all expenses and include a contingency fund
 - Prepare preliminary budget
 - Submit financial reports and receipts to the CEM office by mid-September
- Create or clarify job descriptions
- Order adult class text from Herald House
- Establish emergency procedures for various situations. Coordinate details with camp nurse and/or waterfront director.
- Communicate necessary information in advance for registration purposes
- Request all staff to attend The Skills and Leadership Training Event in the Spring.
- Recruit the following staff as required (adults working with children must be a Registered Children's/Youth Worker; there must be a minimum of 2 adults with each group of children, both of whom must be a Registered Youth Worker and oversee all aspects of the program:
 - Christian Education Director
 - Adult class(es) facilitator(s)
 - Older Youth/Young Adult class facilitator
 - Sr. High class instructors
 - Jr. High Class instructors
 - Junior Class instructors
 - Early Junior Class instructors
 - Primary Class instructors
 - Kindergarten Class instructors
 - Nursery Class caregivers
 - Snack coordinator
 - Prayer service Coordinator
 - Evangelist Ministry Coordinator
 - Campfire coordinator
 - Youth Ministry Coordinator
 - Worship Service Coordinator
 - Morning Devotions Coordinator
 - Administrations to the sick Coordinator
 - Music Coordinator
 - Children's Choir Leader
 - Camp Nurse/Doctor

- Hostess/Host Coordinator
- Head Deacon Coordinator
- Sound System Coordinator
- Washrooms Upkeep Coordinator
- Sanitation Engineer Coordinator
- Afternoon Recreation Coordinator
- Activities/Recreation for children during evening worship service
- Cook
- K.P Coordinator
- Assign hosts for Guest Minister(s) for meals not served in dining hall
- Business director
- Registrar
- Canteen Director
- Herald House Director
- Waterfront Director
- Assistant Waterfront Director
- Communications Director




TRAINING

Training for youth workers is also critical important. Congregations that find it difficult to offer training should involve their children and youth workers in mid-level judicatory training events. It is strongly recommended that youth workers also attend training through local or state social service agencies. Training assistance is available through the Forefront Ministries office at world headquarters, 1-800-825-2806, ext. 1355. or by contacting the CEM office, 1-888-411-7537 ext 21.

PROTECTION BARRIERS

Protection barriers are a key element in the church's ministry to safeguard children and youth. The barriers that will be most helpful in reducing the risk of abuse include:

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- **Two-Deep Leadership**—Two registered youth workers are required on all trips and outings (overnight). The two-deep leadership concept should be applied in all children's and youth programs. Co-ed groups and activities must have co-ed leadership. No one adult should be alone with one young person behind closed doors.
 - **Visible One-on-One Contact**—All contact should be in view of other adults and young people.
 - **Respect of Privacy**—Youth workers need to respect the privacy of young people in shared housing accommodations, such as camps. They should protect their own privacy, as well (separate areas or times for changing clothes, bathing/showering).
 - **Appropriate Dress**—Proper clothing for activities is required. Dress codes should take into consideration the Christ-centered nature of ministry. This applies to adults, children, and youth.
 - **Constructive Discipline**—Discipline should be constructive and reflect Christian values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
 - **Appropriate Physical Contact**—Physical contact between a young person and an adult is an area where great wisdom must be exercised at all times. Physical contact should always be for the benefit of the young person: to give affirmation, to provide comfort when hurting, express joy in greeting, or to offer protection.

Youth Worker Assistants—Young adults, ages 15 to 20, must be registered, given training, and must be under the direct supervision of a registered youth worker.

Camper/Staff Ratios

Ratios of campers per numbers of Counsellors and Assistant Counsellors for Camp:

For Recreational Camps		
# of Counsellors	# of Campers	Age of Campers
2	12	6 yrs or less
2	16	10 yrs or less
2	16	14 yrs or less
2	20	18 yrs or less
For Trip Camps		
2 (minimum)	6	14 yrs or less
2 (minimum)	8	15 to 17 years old
2 (minimum)	10	18 yrs or older

(Adapted from the standards of the Alberta Camping Association, 1999. Revised October 26, 2012 by Tim Stanlick)

Staff Orientation

- ✓ Invite a parents' group to share their expectations with camp staff.
- ✓ Have a veteran camper discuss what they want in a good counsellor.
- ✓ Ask local law enforcement and/or emergency medical personnel to address the staff regarding emergency procedures.
- ✓ Take the staff on a walking tour of the camp to consider safe and hazardous areas.
- ✓ Conduct a CPR training course, first-aid course, or other related skills.
- ✓ Stage a mock emergency WITH STAFF ONLY helping them to understand everything it takes to handle the situation.
- ✓ Put staff into activity groups to simulate the camp experience for campers prior to the beginning of camp.
- ✓ Have each staff member write down one rainy-day activity and compile a list to share with everyone.
- ✓ Use hands-on, activity-based learning experiences to train staff to model the type of experiences best suited for teaching at camp.
- ✓ Review appropriate child safety guidelines; conduct a youth worker registration training if necessary.

(Adapted from *Camp Helps*, produced by the *Community of Christ* 2002)

What to Do With?

- **Extra Camp Photos**

- Give them away or send them to campers and staff after the event
- send them to the *Herald*, Forefront Ministries office, or the Canada East Mission office. Be sure to include a caption and photo permission slips for each person appearing in photos.

- **Forms Collected During Camp**

Forward forms like health and accident reports, camper registration and health forms, and permission forms to the Canada East Mission office where the records can be kept safe and confidential. The address is: 390 Speedvale Avenue East, Guelph, Ontario N1E 1N5.

- **Leftover Medications**

Return prescription medications to their owners. Otherwise, outdated and unused medications should be taken to a pharmacy for disposal. Non-prescription medications may be given to another camp director or nurse for use at a future event.

Information Flow between Directors and Mission Office

(Dated: Nov. 3, 2011)

For legal reasons, for compliance with privacy laws, and for efficient planning the following information needs to be sent to the CEM office:

Before camp (i.e. retreat, reunion or camp):

1. Staff lists for verification of Youth Worker Registration (All staff must be Registered Youth Workers. Failure to insure that this is the case could result in liability to both the Director and the church.)
2. Budgets for verification of solvency and for advancing funds to cooks, etc.

After the camp (i.e. retreat, reunion or camp):

1. Camper and Staff registration forms
2. Camper and staff address lists
3. Prompt payment of invoices
4. Final Financial Report within 30 days of camp or for McGowans Lake & Erie Beach, by Oct 5th for CEM Conference.
4. Surplus funds
5. Incident reports, immediately.