

Breathing Space Camp Behavior Standards Parent Agreement

Breathing Space advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention, and the development of self-discipline.

Broadly, our camp rules fall into three categories:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Kind
3. Have Fun

At the beginning of a camp, we discuss our rules and how we can help everyone have a good week by remembering them. Campers often make suggestions about what behaviors fall into our rule categories and why. For example, “no hitting” falls into all of them. “Listen to the teacher” also fits every category.

Breathing Space believes that all children want to connect to others, be accepted into the group, and behave appropriately. We see most unacceptable behaviors as a sign that there is an unmet need – physical or emotional. Breathing Space does not construct rewards/punishment or use shame in response to camper behavior. We treat our campers with respect and expect them to treat staff, each other, and camp facilities respectfully.

None of our rules involves sitting still during yoga, doing every pose, or completing arts and crafts activities. There are lots of reasons a camper might choose not to participate in organized activities. While we will encourage participation, if a camper opt out of an activity without disrupting it or distracting other campers, they will be allowed to do so. If there is a pattern of non-participation, staff will check in with parents.

Unacceptable Behaviors

We expect campers to respect each other, the staff, and the camp host site. We can not tolerate the following behaviors:

- Repeatedly refusing to follow behavior guidelines or camp rules
- Refusal to participate in activities or cooperate with staff to a degree that disrupts activities
- Using profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or abusive language
- Stealing or damaging property (personal or camp property)
- Leaving a program, or the camp group while on a field trip, without permission
- Endangering the health and safety of children and/or staff
- Teasing, making fun of or bullying of other campers or staff
- Physical aggression toward campers or staff

And it should go without saying,

- Use of illicit drugs, alcohol or tobacco or sexual conduct of any kind

About Physical Violence or Aggression

While minor pushing and hitting often happens with young children and some children don't know their own strength, it is our obligation to protect all campers. We reserve the right to dismiss a student from camp that the staff and camp director feel poses a threat to the physical or emotional safety of other campers.

Physical aggression – including hitting, punching, kicking, biting – resulting in injury or violent enough to potentially injure other campers is grounds for immediate dismissal from camp.

Physically aggressive behavior affects the emotional safety of other campers even if the victims of the behavior are not physically injured. Therefore, a pattern of such behavior with no improvement despite interventions is also grounds for dismissal.

Discipline Process

We will address challenging behaviors or camper conflict in the moment with age appropriate expectations. Most behaviors will not escalate to the level requiring parent notification. All behavior will be evaluated in the context in which it happens on a case-by-case basis, and response will follow this basic process:

Step 1 - Verbal Redirection:

- Camper will be verbally reminded of expectations and redirected to appropriate behavior.
- Staff will attempt to address any underlying problems or triggers to the unacceptable behavior.

Most of the time, this is all that will be needed.

Step 2 - Staff Intervention:

- If the behavior continues or the behavior involves a conflict (physical or verbal) between campers, the camper(s) will be removed from the activity until they are able to behave appropriately.
- Staff will attempt to mediate conflicts or help campers fix any problems that they caused or cleanup any messes that they have made.
- Parents *may* be notified at the end of the day after the first Step 2 response and definitely if there are multiple.

We don't feel parents need to hear an accounting of every misstep their child makes on what generally was a good day, but we do wish to engage parents as partners in helping campers have a good experience. For minor issues, staff will use their discretion as to whether the report behavior. We are most likely report patterns of behavior or situations in which a child particularly struggled if we are concerned about potential recurrence or if we are looking for parental insight.

Step 3 – Parent Report:

- If the behavior repeats or is severe, the parent will be notified
 - a) by verbal report at the end of the day for relatively minor issues,
 - b) by text message or phone for urgent or serious issues, which may include property damage or safety concerns,
 - c) in a written incident report if the behavior falls into one of our unacceptable behaviors categories, especially physical violence or behaviors that create a safety hazard.
- Staff, parents, and camper will develop a plan to prevent a recurrence of the problem behaviors.
- Three or more text message/phone call notifications or incident reports indicates a pattern of behavior that may result in dismissal from camp if not corrected.

Step 4 – Early Pickup and Potential Dismissal:

- Camper behaviors that endanger themselves or other campers or that are particularly egregious may result in the camper being dismissed early for the day. Parents will be notified by both text message and phone call.
 - An incident report will be provided for parents.
 - The camper may be asked to sign a behavior pledge before returning to camp.
 - In most cases not involving camper safety, the camper will be offered an opportunity to try again.
- Campers may be asked not to return due to
 - Repeat behavior problems that do not improve despite verbal warnings and parental involvement, or
 - behaviors that pose a safety threat to the camper or other campers.

Camper fees are non-refundable if a camper is sent home for disciplinary reasons.

Signature: I have read and agree to help my camper abide by Breathing Space Camp Behavior Standards.

Parent name / Signature / Date

Camper Name(s)