



TRAINING MANUAL FOR STAFF AND CAMP COUNSELORS

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Welcome

Welcome to Teen Reach Adventure Camp (T.R.A.C.). Thank you for saying “yes” to serving at-risk youth in foster care. As a volunteer at T.R.A.C. you will experience the life-changing power of God’s love. Attending training and reading this manual, in its entirety, will prepare you for T.R.A.C.

Volunteers are required to attend all training. **New staff/camp counselors** will attend **eight hours** and **returning/veteran staff** will attend **four hours**, not including meals. These are the minimums and may be longer, at the discretion of the local camp director. In addition to attending training:

1. Read this manual in its entirety. It is not possible to cover every detail during training.
2. Sign the T.R.A.C. Volunteer Code of Conduct at the back of this manual.
3. Arrive on time for training, meetings and camp.
4. Adhere to all T.R.A.C. policies and procedures.
5. Prepare yourself spiritually, physically and mentally for T.R.A.C.
6. Be a positive role model by dressing and acting modestly and appropriately.
7. Show up – be present, focused and all-in at camp. Your T.R.A.C. Director and, more importantly, the campers are depending on you.

OVERVIEW OF THE T.R.A.C. CHALLENGE COURSE

The T.R.A.C. Challenge Course is especially designed to serve “at risk” youth who have suffered abuse, neglect or abandonment. The Challenge Course gives the opportunity to incorporate the CrossTalk lessons into solving problems as campers work in a team. The challenges are like group team building activities, however, they incorporate a time for campers to reflect on their feelings and actions in relation to their current situation. This can be a very sacred time and for this reason, only campers, their camp counselors of the same biological sex and facilitators are permitted on the Challenge Course. This is not a therapeutic time but rather a time for the facilitators to open conversations that allow the camp counselors and their campers to have meaningful discussions.

The challenges increase in difficulty throughout the time at camp. New victories, hope, and confidence come with each new challenge. Camp counselors should keep in mind the Challenge Course is about the process and not the product (outcome). There will be times when campers do not accomplish the “goal” or objective. This is part of the journey and an excellent opportunity for discussion. Our goal is for campers to see themselves as leaders who can impact their own stories, knowing they have people supporting and praying for them. We have found the way the challenge course is applied at T.R.A.C. helps build teamwork and trust between campers and campers; campers and their camp counselors and staff.

T.R.A.C. MISSION STATEMENT

To provide *hope* and a *future* through single-sex camps designed for abused, abandoned and neglected youth, ages 12-15, who reside in foster care.

VISION – PURPOSE – STRATEGY – VALUES

Vision: To empower every at-risk youth through personal development and emotional healing in order to progress through their teen years and successfully transition into adulthood.

Purpose: To improve and enhance the lives of at-risk youth, now and in the future, by helping them develop teamwork, trust, self-value and respect for others.

Strategy: Develop new camps and mentoring programs by providing quality training and materials, along with support and coaching of leadership and volunteers.

Core Values:

Integrity – Our actions will be consistent with our words and intentions.

People First – The teens, foster and biological parents, social services, and volunteers we serve are the beneficiaries of the programs of Teen Reach: T.R.A.C. and T.R.A.C.*life*.

Servant Leaders – We will manage the program by serving at every level of the organization.

Outstanding Quality – We will operate with professionalism and quality in everything we do.

Financial Stewardship – We will manage donations and funds with the highest integrity.

Biblically-based – We will live by the Word, always seeking guidance for decisions and direction.

We are dedicated to making each camper feel safe and special. Our goal is to “provide hope” to the fatherless as noted in Jeremiah 29:11 and Isaiah 40:30 – 31a.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF TEEN REACH ADVENTURE CAMP

1. **A Bible for every camper:** Jesus' truth offers hope and renewed identity for those who are hurting. It is important for every camper to receive a Bible.
2. **Single-sex camps:** T.R.A.C. is designed to operate as a single sex camp with the well-being of the campers, staff and camp counselors in mind. This alleviates many of the distractions teenagers experience at this developmental stage.
3. **Camper names:** God knows each camper's name and we want to make sure campers, and volunteers, receive signs above their bunks or cot. These signs will contain their names, the spiritual meanings and related scriptures.
4. **T.R.A.C. Challenge Course:** The T.R.A.C. Challenge Course is a low element course designed for youth who struggle with trust, self-value and teamwork. It is a fun and deep time which brings camp counselors and campers closer together.
5. **CrossTalk and Teachable Moments:** The most significant ways to show Christ's love, and the hope He offers, to campers at T.R.A.C. are the events of each day. In Deuteronomy 6, this is referred to as ALONG THE WAY. Look for teachable moments to creatively weave God's truth into the camper's day.

CrossTalk: This teaching time happens every morning after breakfast. CrossTalk is based on the story of a person in the Bible and teaches campers positive character attributes.

Prayer at Meals: Each camper should have an opportunity to pray for a meal at camp or during CrossTalk. This will never be forced, just offered.

Quiet Moments: T.R.A.C. camp counselors will have Reflection Time after CrossTalk and other quiet moments with campers. They will use this time to start reflective conversations and ask questions provided in the Camper Journal. This allows campers time to voice their thoughts and questions. It is important for camp counselors to be great listeners.

Activity Centers: This is usually down time for campers, camp counselors and staff. It may be unstructured and allows campers to build trust and share as while working on projects or playing games. Campers should be encouraged in what they are doing, remembering... "It's not the PRODUCT...It's the PROCESS" that builds their self-value.

Recreational Venues: Staff and Camp counselors are encouraged to look for times to insert God's truth and teaching on active venues as well. This includes integrating the CrossTalk curriculum in activities such as archery, challenge course and canoeing.

6. **A positive, affirming, non-judgmental and safe camp environment:** Most campers have had few encouraging and safe experiences in their life. T.R.A.C. promotes positive affirmation along with physical, spiritual and emotional safety. T.R.A.C. encourages teens to tell their story and be empowered through the support they receive from staff and peers. This is done through the T.R.A.C. Challenge Course, I SPYs and Achievement Beads. Campers are kept safe when staff, and other campers, respect their thoughts and maintain their confidentiality before, during and after camp.

"I SPYs": Campers receive an "I SPY" for participating in "a random act of kindness." "I SPYs," given by staff and camp counselors, are read during each meal with the camper getting a special treat (gummy worm, etc.) *All campers should receive "I SPYs."*

ACHIEVEMENT BEADS: These are introduced to campers at orientation. Each camper receives a string necklace at the beginning of camp. Participation beads are given at each venue. There are many ways campers can achieve beads, but there are certain beads that are given at the end of the camp during the awards ceremony (i.e. Leadership bead). (See details in "Positive Self Value.")

7. **Priority to RFK graduates:** It is a primary goal of T.R.A.C. to support the connection Royal Family KIDS has already made with campers. This encourages a cyclical and stable model benefitting teens and promoted by social services, foster parents and camp volunteers:
- It encourages social services to send more kids to RFK camps.
 - It gives campers consistency with friends, camp counselors, T.R.A.C. staff and the program.
 - It allows foster parents to have a respite and to send their teens to a proven program.
 - It allows RFK camp counselors to follow their campers to T.R.A.C., if they desire.
8. **Lessening liability:** Wise organizations exercise the highest level of risk management for the good of their mission. At T.R.A.C., we offer an incredible camp opportunity for youth in foster care. Any breach of policy or confidentiality could affect the future of this organization and other local T.R.A.C.s, impacting hundreds of teens. It is necessary to ensure the camp, the staff, the camp counselor and the campers exercise every precaution available. Directors will:
- Complete a comprehensive evaluation of all prospective volunteers based on a written application, background checks, multiple references and a personal interview.
 - Ensure all volunteers attend mandatory training and follow Two-Deep rules and confidentiality laws.
 - Read the T.R.A.C. Social Media Statement of Position to all T.R.A.C. volunteers.
 - Review the T.R.A.C. Compliance Survey with ALL volunteers so they know the national standards and policies to which everyone is accountable.

POLICY AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

It is important to ensure the safety and 24-hour protection of the youth who are placed in our care. Due to the nature of child abuse and society's views of it, we must be wise and cautious. This is one of the MOST IMPORTANT areas of training we cannot stress enough. Please remember that lack of following these policies and safety guidelines could affect you as an individual, the national program and the youth we serve. *To avoid any question of inappropriate involvement with a youth, T.R.A.C. volunteers MUST ALWAYS adhere to the following rules:*

1. All directors, staff, camp counselors and/or other volunteers who have contact with youth must be at least 20 years old, successfully complete an application (annually), background check, personal interview and training before volunteering at T.R.A.C. in any capacity. Once selected, new volunteers will attend a minimum of eight (8) hours of training. Veteran volunteers will attend a minimum of four (4) hours of training.
2. The T.R.A.C. Model strictly enforces a TWO-DEEP rule which *protects youth* from possible abuse and *protects staff/camp counselors* from unfounded allegations of abuse. TWO-DEEP requires two adults always to be present. TWO-DEEP is especially important during any cabin time. A recommendation is for cabin groups to consist of two camp counselors with four teens, maintaining the ratio of two campers to each camp counselor. Campers should never be in the cabin alone nor should one camp counselor be with campers alone.
3. Two campers or a camper and a camp counselor will NOT be INSIDE sleeping bags together.
4. Phones, cameras or other video-recording devices will not be carried by T.R.A.C. staff except for the camp director, camp photographer/videographer or other Teen Reach staff, with camp director permission. This is to ensure the privacy/confidentiality rights of campers. The camp photographer/videographer will take ALL photos and videos of the campers for photo albums and camp highlight videos. (Please see Social Media Statement of Position). *Laws are very specific concerning the privacy and confidentiality of teens in foster care.*



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

NOTES:

- 5. Appropriate Touch:** The importance of positive touch cannot be stressed enough. However, many of these adolescents have experienced touch in a negative way. We want to show them there are appropriate and safe ways to touch and be touched. (This topic is also addressed in the Teen Protection Program).
- Ask for permission before hugging or patting a camper.
 - Watch for body language that says, "I'm not comfortable" or "I'm too comfortable with your hug."
 - Front-on hugs, piggyback rides and lap sitting are discouraged. Side hugs, high fives or fist bumps are suggested instead.
 - Redirect wandering hands. Youth who have been sexually molested may try to touch inappropriately. REDIRECT and DISCUSS gently without embarrassing the youth.
- 6.** Be on time for all activities. This shows respect for your fellow volunteers and campers. This also makes the day go much smoother.
- 7.** Camp Counselors/Staff will NOT bring their children to camp while campers are present. This puts the campers and children of staff at risk. Additionally, camp counselors/staff will not serve at the camp their foster, adoptive or biological children are attending.
- 8.** Attend all activities. Staying in cabins is not an option. If a camper will not leave, call for the camp behavioral specialist for assistance. Make sure the buddy camper doesn't suffer because of the struggles one camper is having.
- 9.** Staff/camp counselor medications must be secured in a staff area, away from campers, or secured with camp medical staff.
- 10.** Lead by EXAMPLE. Remember campers watch our every move and listen to every word. Avoid inappropriate words, discussions, gestures and attitudes. Model appropriate hygiene, modest attire, cabin cleanliness and respect to fellow camp staff.
- 11.** Explain camp boundaries and activities to campers at orientation. Keeping campers in the loop about camp boundaries and the camp schedule lessens anxiety and helps them feel safe.



The poor man is not he who is without a cent, but he who is without a dream.

-Harry Kemp

NOTES:

12. Keep all personal items such as snacks/junk food and cell phones in a camp-designated area. *Cell phones will not be carried around camp by staff/camp counselors or kept where campers may get them.*
13. Be consistent and fair by adhering to camp rules, equally, with all campers whenever possible.
14. Do not leave campers at activities unless another staff member or a relief camp counselor is aware you are leaving. Ensure there is two-deep coverage before taking a break.
15. Staff and campers will always wear name tags . This identifies T.R.A.C. volunteers as safe people and helps in remembering camper names.
16. Do not exchange personally identifying information with campers. This includes addresses, phone numbers and any other forms of information. Additionally, Facebook or any social media contact, identifying statements, or photos are a breach of confidentiality.
17. ALL medical information, applications (for staff and campers), background checks (fingerprinting), photos and videos are to be kept in a HIPAA-compliant storage area, within two different locking systems, for a minimum of seven (7) years.

Reporting Abuse: All States, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have statutes which require all cases of suspected child abuse to be reported.

Reporting procedures: T.R.A.C. staff or camp counselors must report the allegation to the camp director and camp behavioral specialist. The camp director will notify the proper authorities, including the case worker of the youth. If youth is in immediate danger, the camp director also needs to report the abuse to a law enforcement official. *The camp director should contact the Teen Reach National Office within a week after camp to discuss the incident report. The incident will also be noted on the annual Compliance Report.*



I never knew what hunger was until I missed a few meals.

Perspective

NOTES:

Medical Standards: Teen Reach Adventure Camp medical staff is responsible for collecting and dispensing ALL camper medication during camp. T.R.A.C. medical staff should provide latex gloves and basic emergency first aid supplies for camp counselors/staff. Volunteers may carry these supplies in T.R.A.C. fanny packs or in their own backpacks.

All camper medication will be checked for accuracy at registration to ensure correct labeling and dosage. It will be returned to the legal guardian at the end of camp.

Every camper will be checked for head lice at registration and treated if necessary. LICE TREATMENT includes washing the camper's hair with RID (or similar lice shampoo) and changing into a T.R.A.C. shirt. Registration staff will collect all the camper's clothing, sleeping bag, pillow, and luggage. The cloth items will be cleaned in a commercial washer and dryer. A second treatment with lice shampoo is recommended.

Spiritual Boundaries: It is important to note the relationship between T.R.A.C. and social services is a very sensitive one. Therefore, camps will strictly adhere to these policies:

1. No proselytizing
2. No altar calls
3. No laying on of hands
4. No casting out of demons
5. No water baptisms
6. No speaking in tongues/prophecy
7. No communion
8. No anointing with oil

Respect the youth's religious affinity. T.R.A.C. staff and camp counselors are in an incredible position to PLANT SEEDS OF HOPE in these very impressionable youth. We want to be available when campers have questions about God or faith issues, but not impose any of our own beliefs on them during the time they are at camp.

We also ask camp counselors and staff to:

1. Listen to campers about their thoughts, fears, hurts and dreams.
2. Be prepared to lead them to Christ, if they ask.
3. Thank them for sharing and let them know you won't share with others what they have shared with you. (Unless it discloses current abuse, happening NOW.)



The key to ministry is...
SHOWING UP

NOTES:

4. Be available.
 - Our camper to camp counselor ratio is two campers to one camp counselor of the same biological sex as the campers.
 - Our goal is to show the campers "Christ in Action" in our lives.
 - Quality time with adults is something these kids don't experience very often in their everyday lives. Make a huge effort to spend extra, uninterrupted, time with them.

Confidentiality:

Code of Ethics: Volunteers working with children/adolescents who have been abused have unique confidentiality responsibilities because they deal with minors whose rights are protected by law.

Therefore, volunteers will...

- Not share information, verbally or through any type of technology or social media source, about a camper to others or reveal information which would identify the teens in any way.
- Refrain from disclosing the dates and location of the camp, before, during and after T.R.A.C. This includes verbal communication or through any type of technology or social media source.
- Disclose information to the camp director if information is attained that puts the youth in jeopardy in any way, such as current abuse or neglect.
- Focus on, and represent, the best interests of the camper in their care.

Teen Reach Policy Statement regarding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:

The purpose of Teen Reach Adventure Camps is to provide a safe place for emotional growth. One way in which Teen Reach promotes a safe environment is by having separate camps for boys and girls. There may be times, however, when campers may present same sex attraction or gender identity issues. The Teen Reach Policy Statement Regarding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) provides camp directors the following guidelines for providing a safe environment for everyone.

- Screen all camper applications for campers who may be dealing with same sex attraction or gender identity issues.
- Determine whether the camp corresponding to the camper's biological sex can provide a safe place for the camper in question as well as the rest of the campers. This determination is based on facilities and staff availability.
- Collaborate with the applicant's guardian, foster parent or caseworker about appropriate accommodations and safety issues.
- Ensure all staff and campers treat everyone at camp with respect, grace and a non-judgmental attitude.

TEEN REACH SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARDS

Social Media and networking for T.R.A.C. and T.R.A.C.life programs

As a non-profit organization serving abused youth, who are usually wards of the state, in a society where the use of electronic communications and social media are so prevalent, it has become necessary to make a position statement regarding the contact T.R.A.C. and T.R.A.C.life volunteers have with youth who are involved in these programs at the local level.

At Teen Reach Adventure Camps – T.R.A.C.s: The Teen Reach Adventure Camp model involves intensive interaction over three days. Prior to, during or after, T.R.A.C. volunteer staff should put no identifying information or pictures regarding the camp or campers on any type of social media. They should have no contact with the campers outside of their local camp unless it has been approved through social services or a T.R.A.C.life program. This includes, but is not limited to all social media sites, texting, tweeting, emailing, etc.

At T.R.A.C.life mentoring programs: The T.R.A.C.life mentoring program is a yearlong commitment made between a thoroughly screened mentor and a youth (mentee). Any contact between a mentor and mentee through electronic communications or social media, including but not limited to all social media sites, tweeting, texting, emailing, etc., must be approved in writing by the foster parent, guardian and caseworker. A copy of the approval must be maintained in the mentee's file. If the mentor/mentee relationship is terminated, the contact agreement is also terminated, and no further contact may be approved through the T.R.A.C.life program.

FIVE-FINGER CONTRACT

The five-finger contract represents the rules Teen Reach has at T.R.A.C. and for T.R.A.C.life mentoring.

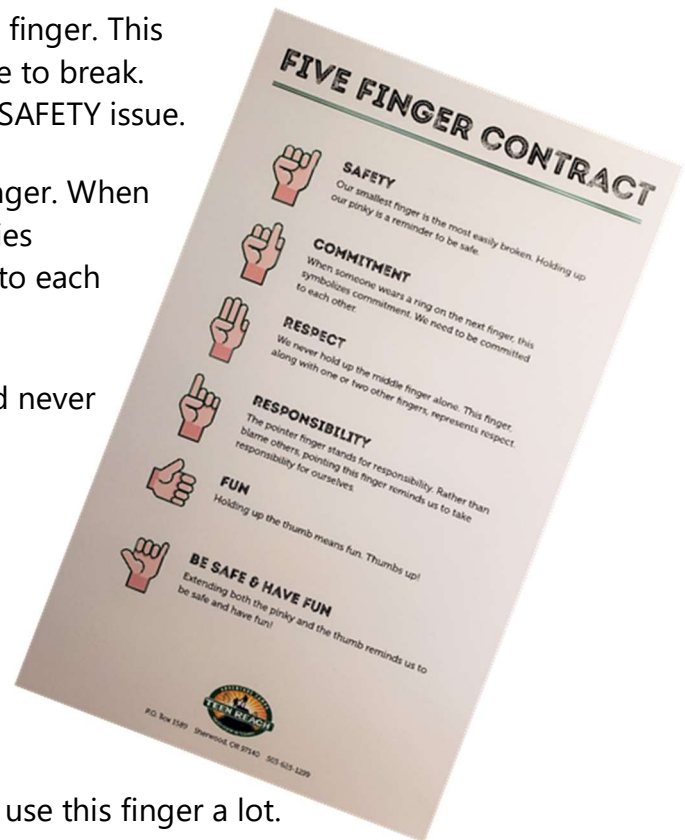
The five-finger contract starts with the smallest finger. This finger is the smallest finger and the easiest one to break. When someone holds up this finger, there is a SAFETY issue.

The second finger of our contract is the ring finger. When someone wears a ring on this finger, this signifies COMMITMENT. We all need to be committed to each other.

The third finger is our middle finger and should never be held up alone. The middle finger represents RESPECT. We need to respect each other.

The fourth, or pointer finger, stands for RESPONSIBILITY. We are responsible for the good of those around us, but especially for ourselves. Even when we can't change others, we ensure WE are acting responsibly.

The thumb stands for FUN. "Thumbs up." "We'll use this finger a lot."

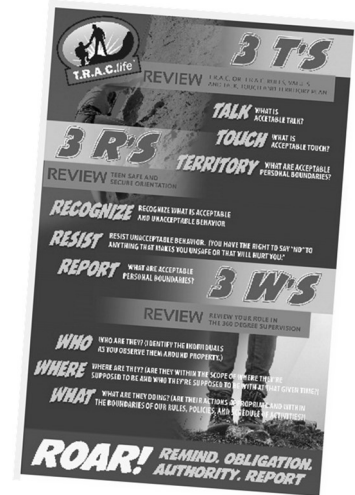


TEEN REACH PROTECTION PROGRAM

The Teen Reach Protection Program enhances the Safety Policies and Procedures we already have in place. The program goes into more DETAIL in certain areas and offers reminder items such as posters and bracelets for both volunteers and campers/mentees.

Every volunteer at T.R.A.C. is an essential part of the protection plan. Each person is a mandatory reporter and must be willing to speak up if he/she sees something inappropriate or questionable.

Many offenders have gotten away with abuse for years because good people saw something but didn't feel as if they had the authority or the obligation to say something.



360° SUPERVISION or the THREE "W's"

ALL T.R.A.C. Volunteers keep a 360° view of their surroundings whenever they are with youth.

360° Supervision (or the 3 W's) means you are asking yourself these three questions, regarding people you see when you're serving your campers.

1. **WHO** are they? *Observe and identify individuals around you when you're with your camper.*
2. **WHERE** are they? *Are certain individuals where they're supposed to be? Who are they supposed to be with at that given time? Where are they located when you observe them?*
3. **WHAT** are they doing? *Are their actions appropriate and within the boundaries of T.R.A.C. rules and policies?*

To help volunteers remember the new Teen Reach Protection Program and talk to campers/mentees about the program, an ORANGE GLOW IN THE DARK wristband is available at no charge to all Teen Reach programs.

THE THREE T's: SAFE TALK – TOUCH – TERRITORY

The Teen Reach Protection Program and reminder items include the 3 T's and the 3 R's to remind volunteers to talk to youth about HOW to keep themselves SAFE while they're at camp, on a mentoring visit OR just hanging out with their family and friends.

It's important for each T.R.A.C. volunteer to promote safe Talk, Touch and Territory with fellow volunteers and with the youth we serve.

Safe Talk: What is acceptable talk?

Appropriate	Not Appropriate
a. praise for achievement or behavior	a. compliments or questions relating to physique or body development
b. verbal/written encouragement	b. sexual jokes, any sexual innuendoes
c. teachable moments	c. verbal harassment, taunting or abuses
d. answering questions	d. sexual coaching or conversation
e. promoting or discovering life skills	

Safe Touch: What is acceptable touch?

Appropriate	Not Appropriate
a. handshakes and high-fives	a. back rubs or massages, rub on lotion or sunscreen (spray sunscreen okay)
b. short, side hugs for congratulations or greeting	b. touching of private parts (no exceptions!)
c. arm around the shoulders	c. touching a child in anger, disgust, or frustration
d. helping with activities or games (showing how to hold a bat, etc.)	d. frontal hugs, lap sitting, piggybacks
	e. sexually touching or kissing

Safe Territory: What are acceptable personal boundaries?

Appropriate	Not Appropriate
a. Always have two adults behind doors, down trails, secluded areas, etc.	a. favoritism or give personal gifts
b. one-on-one interactions in public view	b. sitting or lying on another person's bed
c. group or public environments	c. private one-on-one interactions behind doors/secluded areas with one adult
	d. mooning, streaking, flashing, etc.

THE THREE R's: RECOGNIZE – RESIST – REPORT

RECOGNIZE what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Let the youth know that if it makes them feel awkward or uncomfortable, the behavior is NOT acceptable.

RESIST unacceptable behavior. Let youth know they have the right to say “NO” to anything that makes them feel unsafe.

REPORT what makes us feel unsafe or if rules have been broken. Reinforce with youth our reporting protocol: Tell a Camp counselor, Staff, Camp Director, your Mentor or Staff.

Sharing these SIMPLE SAFETY facts with the youth we serve, can save their lives from gangs and human trafficking.

ROAR! = Remind – Obligation – Authority – Report

- Remind volunteers and campers/mentees to use these safety guidelines and policies.
- Volunteers have an Obligation to say something about inappropriate or questionable activity.
- Volunteers have the Authority to ask, question and intervene.
- Volunteers need to Report anything out of the norm or inappropriate.

BUILDING AWARENESS: Abuse and Neglect

Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect

"If we see children who have been abused and neglected as 'damaged goods' we will in turn unconsciously relay this to them. We need to see them as a being with potential for wholeness and healing." Doris Sanford, Child Abuse Specialist

Although we cannot undo the damage of a damaged childhood, we can give a teen a new perspective on who he or she CAN BE.

What is classified as Abuse and Neglect?

Definitions of abuse and neglect are based on the dependent status of children and on the right and responsibilities of parent and society until the child is age 18. Child abuse laws limit normal privacy rights by specifically prohibiting parental acts (things one does) or omissions (things one fails to do) that harm or threaten children: Physical or mental injury; sexual abuse or exploitation; negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child under age 18.

Those who supervise children professionally are REQUIRED by law to report suspected acts of abuse or neglect, and county social service departments are REQUIRED to investigate all reported cases.

Four Major Classifications of Abuse

Physical Abuse: Any non-accidental physical injury inflicted by a child's caretaker.

A Child can Exhibit: Avoidance of physical contact with adults; may be too affectionate with any adult; demanding; poor self-esteem. Physical signs such as bruises, welts, burns, fractures or bite marks.

Neglect: Failure to provide for basic need of a child: Food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, supervision.

A Child can Exhibit: Tiredness. Delayed social development. Begging/stealing. Wants to be alone. Will appear unclean, inappropriately dressed and may need glasses, dental or medical care.

Sexual Abuse: Any sexual offense against a child either direct or indirect.

A Child can Exhibit: Baby-like behavior; poor relationships with other children; unwillingness to participate; cautious behavior; reluctance to shower/change clothes; sexualized behavior uncommon for his or her age; bedwetting.

Emotional Abuse: Ridiculing, humiliating, rejecting, persistent favoring. This form of abuse almost always accompanies other forms.

A Child can Exhibit: Self-destructive behavior; stunted physical, mental, and emotional growth; disorganization; rigid compulsiveness; anxiety; too responsible for age; autistic/delusional; tantrums; lack of creativity; difficulty making friends; nightmares or sleeping disorders; bedwetting.

What does this information mean to you?

- To help volunteers understand why these teens may act the way they do.
- For camp counselors and staff to pray over campers, and for themselves, in preparation for camp.
- To help all volunteers be more informed about abuse.

No matter the circumstances surrounding these teens before they arrive at T.R.A.C, or any situation which may arise during camp, volunteers can have complete confidence...

- The Spirit of the Lord is with you and the campers.
- You can do all things through Christ Jesus who gives you strength.
- You will do your very best to provide a safe and positive environment for each camper.

Mental guidelines to help you and your camper have a great camping experience

- Look at your camper as a package full of possibilities and potential.
- Work with a camper who may not want to do anything by encouraging him or her to do something, even if it isn't the activity on the schedule. Ask for help from extra staff members.
- Remember how you felt the first time you went to camp. You may be the only person a camper thinks of, when he or she reflects on the T.R.A.C. experience and remembers who helped turn his or her their life around. "You can make a difference!"

BUILDING AWARENESS: Your Camper

Adolescent Development:

Adolescents have their own way of thinking, feeling, believing and perceiving themselves and the world around them. The teens who come to T.R.A.C. may be developmentally delayed due to their abuse, but others may be resilient to their past and may even be thriving.

Basic Nature and Needs of Adolescents:

- To feel significant, important, and unique.
- To experience others, being affected by their actions and decisions.
- To interact positively with others and have a sense of belonging.
- To love and be loved, trust and be trusted, respect and be respected.
- To experience a range of emotions without being ashamed.
- To have opportunities to make critical decisions for self and others.
- To risk joining adventurous activities without fear of failing.
- To experiment with ideas without encountering undue roadblocks from the adult world or their childhood.
- To realize the difference between feelings and behavior.
- To learn to understand and appropriately express their feelings.
- To learn to talk through their needs and feelings.
- To learn to face and handle uncertainties.
- To learn to be challenged by change in a positive way.
- To learn to formulate personal values and separate them from conflicting peer values.
- To gain confidence in decision making.

Teens whose psychosocial development has been stunted at some critical point in their lives may exhibit:

- Dull eyes, eye gaze or avoidance, indifference.
- Lack of friendliness or smiles.
- Fearful or withdrawn.
- Impassiveness or anger when others around them become hurt or depressed.
- Sleep and eating difficulties.
- Scattered attention.
- Anxiety.

Understanding Camper Differences:

Most campers who come to T.R.A.C. will fit into one or more of the following categories.

- Developmentally delayed.
- Highly sexualized (due to their own sexual abuse).
- Rural or urban areas of poverty.
- A Variety of cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Varied religious backgrounds or no religious affiliation.
- Diverse family situations: divorced, one parent, never-married parent, blended, or dysfunctional foster families.
- Moved around a lot.
- All come from backgrounds of serious abuse or neglect.
- Male and female adolescents are vastly different, avoid generalities and labeling with yourself and other volunteers.

Ways you can help:

Campers will be aware of their differences when they come to camp. Staff and camp counselors can help teens feel special, not different.

Possible camper backgrounds and situations and ways you can help:

- Low Socioeconomic Status: Campers may tease another teen about threadbare shorts. Privately ask if the camper has another pair. If not, mend the hole in the tattered pair or report the need to the camp director to see about getting a new pair of shorts.
- Racial/Ethnic/Cultural: Try to redirect generalizations campers may make about each other.

Our response to differences may be...“That wasn't OK.” Or “That wasn't an appropriate thing to say. Please apologize.” If the camper doesn't apologize, then drop it. He or she may think about the comment and talk to you about it later

Understanding resilience in youth:

Resilience is the ability to bounce back or recover quickly from illness, change, misfortune or sustained life stress. Adolescent resilience is a matter of promoting certain qualities in the teen to help in this recovery process, such as perseverance, integrity and honesty.

Four Characteristics of Resilient Youth:

- Take an active approach to solving problems.
- Perceive their experiences constructively.
- Gain positive attention from other people.
- Use faith to sustain a positive vision of life.

Ways you can help build resilience:

- Accepting temperamental idiosyncrasies and providing campers experiences that challenge, but do not overwhelm (Challenge Course).
- Conveying to campers a sense of responsibility and caring.
- Rewarding campers for helpfulness and cooperation (I SPYs – Achievement Beads).
- Encouraging campers to develop a special interest or hobby to generate gratification and self-value.
- Modeling by example a conviction that life makes sense despite the inevitable adversities each of us encounter.
- Encouraging teens to reach out, beyond their immediate family, to others who care about them.
- Focusing on the youth, not the behavior - treat him or her like a valuable human being.

Communication and sensitivity skills:

- Listen without pre-thinking about what you will say.
- Accept (validate) what the camper is saying. Do not say they shouldn't feel, think or say something.
- Restate what the teen says when you need to understand better.
- Answer when a camper speaks to you. Lack of words can mean rejection or disapproval.
- Be aware of your body language and body stance. 93% of what a person communicates is non-verbal. Squarely facing an abused and neglected teen can be threatening to him or her.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Behavioral Stages:

1. *Pre-affiliation Stage* – Takes place during the first few hours of camp. Introduce yourself and make light conversation.
2. *Power and Control Stage* – Once youth feel safe, they may start testing the waters with other campers and staff to see how consistently rules are enforced.
3. *Separation Stage* – Campers may start to shut down. It's important to not make any promises at this point. Say good-bye and a silent prayer as they leave.

Modeling appropriate behavior:

Most campers who attend T.R.A.C. have had few people in their lives model appropriate behavior around them. They will carefully watch how you react to other campers, adults and how you react when something doesn't go right. Once again, three days can mean a great deal to these teens and your positive role modeling can too.

Redirect and reframe:

When irritations occur climb, hike, create and enjoy. Change irritations into moments of fun. Watch for restlessness. Keeping your campers engaged and busy will help prevent trouble.

Avoid judgmental statements:

- Do not act shocked.
- Use "I" Statements (I'm sorry that happened to you).

Food or mealtime behavior:

- Watch for hoarding, or not eating at all. Explain there will be enough food.
- Some campers will smack their food and grab for food. Explain the polite way to act at the table.
- Note eating disorders and talk to camp Be-Spec.

Set boundaries:

- Remain calm and firm.
- Make sure you have the camper's attention and expect him/her to comply.
- Give clear and specific directions/expectations.
- If they don't have a choice, don't ask...tell. (We're going fishing now.)

Handling Major Behavior Issues:

Major behavior issues very rarely happen at T.R.A.C. If they do, call your camp behavioral specialist. If you need more details about offender behavior, and what to look for, ask your camp behavioral specialist (Be-Spec) for more information.

CAMPER EXPECTATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Each Camper will...

- 1.** Learn the Five Finger Contract at orientation so he/she will know camp boundaries and be safe at T.R.A.C.
- 2.** Have opportunities to invite Jesus into his/her heart during quiet times, cabin times, or reflection times.
- 3.** Have opportunities to observe positive role models for dress, hygiene, and character attributes.
- 4.** Improve self-value with positive reinforcement through:
 - Encouragement from camp counselors and staff.
 - Challenge Course.
 - CrossTalk and Reflection Time.
 - "I SPYs" and the Achievement Bead program.
- 5.** Develop TEAMWORK SKILLS with:
 - Encouragement from camp counselors and staff.
 - Challenge Course.
 - Recreational activities.
- 6.** Recall Positive Memories:
 - By taking home a "T.R.A.C. PACK."
 - By taking home the "meaning of his/her name."
 - By receiving Achievement Beads.
 - By taking home photo albums and "I SPYs."
 - By taking home activity center projects.
 - Of the relationship with his/her camp counselor.
 - Of first-time experiences.
 - From the Award Ceremony.

PREPARING FOR CAMP: Self Awareness

Qualities YOU bring to T.R.A.C.:

- A "call" to work with teens.
- God's unconditional love.
- A servant's heart.
- Compassion - Humility, Gentleness, Respect.
- A Positive Mental Attitude (P.M.A.).
- A desire to help, not to criticize.

How can you be more effective at T.R.A.C.?

1. Don't react.
2. Redirect: Learn to refocus a person's attention to something else.
3. Come with one goal in mind-to help the teens.
4. Seek to understand your own issues (three possible scenarios):
 - *Abusive background* - be aware that sharing your own experiences with these teens will not help them. Listen and encourage them...that's all.
 - *Therapist background* - refrain from imposing a "healing agenda" on the campers. It is impossible to fix a hurting life in three days (only God can do this).
 - *Background free of abuse* - NOT to be considered "inexperienced" or uncompassionate. Working with these teens has more to do with our heart condition than our own experience

Follow camp boundaries:

- *Organizational Boundaries*: We are representing Teen Reach National and every local T.R.A.C. across the nation. Everything we do can affect the rest.
- *Staff/Camp counselor Boundaries*: We are a team.
- *Camp counselor/Camper Boundaries*: Be patient and give campers time to warm up to you and their new surroundings.

Flexibility is a key at Teen Reach Adventure Camp. Schedules may need to be tweaked at the last minute; activities may need to be relocated, etc. Egos, Rights and Rigidity cannot be allowed to shadow the vision of the camp.

Pray when you are aware of a conflict or unhappiness occurring in any area of the camp, give it to God. Ask another staff person to pray with you.

If you find yourself needing help, don't hesitate to consult the camp therapist (Be-Spec).

CROSSTALK CURRICULUM

The purpose of the T.R.A.C. CrossTalk curriculum is to show youth who reside in foster care that God knows and loves them. He cares about their feelings and situations and can give them hope and a bright future. This is accomplished through highlighting the life of a person in the Bible who faced similar difficult circumstances. The emphasis is on how God helped the person and is still fully able to help each camper who attends T.R.A.C. We want campers to have the opportunity to begin a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Things for Teen Reach Adventure Camp volunteers to know about CrossTalk:

- **CrossTalk curriculum is Bible-based.** We encourage campers to use their Bible during CrossTalk. Many campers are not familiar with the Bible and will need assistance.
- **CrossTalk curriculum is interactive.** The CrossTalk teacher will involve the campers in a variety of ways. Encourage them to get involved.
- **CrossTalk curriculum is relevant.** We want the truth of God's Word to become a transformational part of the campers' lives. Help campers process the question *"What does this mean for my life?"*
- **CrossTalk curriculum allows time for reflection.** Each lesson will end in a time of reflection. Camp counselors need to be prepared to pray for their campers and to lead the reflection time.
- **CrossTalk curriculum is not the whole picture.** The themes from CrossTalk will be integrated into other activities. These themes should also be discussed "along the way (Deuteronomy 6).
- **CrossTalk curriculum guards against spiritual abuse.** Present the truth from God's Word but stay away from manipulative practices. We strive to treat each camper with respect and to trust the Holy Spirit to work in each camper's life.

This year's theme: *Wilderness Getaway*

Primary scripture passages: *Exodus 15:22-27; Exodus 16; Exodus 17*

The Main Theme: *Wilderness Getaway 2021*

Day 1 Sub-theme: *Bitter and Sweet*

Day 2 Sub-theme: *Cloudy with a Chance of Manna*

Day 3 Sub-theme: *A Battle for the Soul*

Bible Verse: Isaiah 43:18-19 (New International Version) "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

Emphasis: *Life is full of difficult times. It may feel like we are stuck in a wilderness, wandering in circles. But when God is our guide, He will lead us through and make a way in those dry and difficult places. He will sustain us and transform our failures into victories.*

T.R.A.C. VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

As a director, staff person or camp counselor at Teen Reach Adventure Camp, I will...

1. Fill out my application and background check request honestly and completely.
 2. Attend ALL meetings, interviews, training sessions and show up to camp ON TIME.
 3. Prepare myself spiritually, physically and mentally for serving at T.R.A.C.
 4. Greet campers when they come off the bus with enthusiasm and respect for their personal boundaries.
 5. Encourage campers to participate in all activities and keep them safe.
 6. Avoid bringing my outside life into discussions with campers. This includes things like position, degree, financial status, family, past hurtful experiences, etc.
 7. Dress and act modestly and appropriately; be a positive role model in this area for the campers and others around me. This includes wearing closed-toe shoes, covered mid-drifts and cleavage, one-piece swimsuits for women, no bare chests for men except when swimming, etc.
 8. Adhere to all T.R.A.C. policies and procedures. This includes: Policies on reporting abuse, policies regarding medical and spiritual issues and confidentiality, and the Teen Reach position statement on social media.
 9. Participate in singing and teaching times and encourage campers to do so as well.
 10. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister hope to me when I feel hurt, rejected or like my time at T.R.A.C. does not matter. Remember that "I showed up" and that's the key to ministry.
 11. Say good-bye to campers with a silent prayer for safety and God's continued work in their lives.
 12. Attend Staff Debriefing at the end of camp and the Thank You dinner after camp is over.
- ☐ By checking this box, I hereby acknowledge have read the training manual in its entirety.

Printed name

Signature

Date



Volunteer Commitment and Information Card

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Cell Phone Number _____ Email _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

Insurance _____ Preferred
Number _____ Clinic/hospital _____

Medical Information (allergies, diabetes, etc.):

By signing this card, I commit to volunteering at Teen Reach Adventure Camp. I also certify I have read the T.R.A.C. Volunteer Training Manual in its entirety. And, I agree to follow the policies, procedures and code of conduct contained within the manual.

I agree T.R.A.C./TEEN REACH are not liable for any injury/death that may occur at said camps, training or camp preparation days. If an injury does occur it is noted that the T.R.A.C. leadership staff will do all that is within their power to get proper medical attention, including transportation to a medical facility.

Signature _____ Date _____