



## **Camper Code of Conduct and Parent Communication Protocols**

### **Fostering a Caring and Respectful Camp Community**

At Camp Kawartha, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment where all campers, staff, and families feel respected, supported, and valued. Our Camper Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for behaviour that help us build a caring community where everyone can thrive.

### **Our Core Principles: The Three R's**

We ask all campers to follow three key principles during their stay:

1. **Respect yourself:** Take care of your personal needs (e.g. hygiene, rest, appropriate clothing, hydration, sun safety).
2. **Respect others:** Treat fellow campers and staff with kindness, courtesy, and empathy.
3. **Respect the environment:** Help us care for our 186 acres of natural habitat by avoiding damage to plants, wildlife, and camp facilities.

### **Zero Tolerance for Disrespectful or Harmful Behaviour**

To preserve the safety and dignity of our camp community, Camp Kawartha does not tolerate harassment, bullying, discrimination, or offensive behaviour in any form—whether verbal, physical, emotional, or digital. This includes harmful language or actions based on race, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, culture, or any other aspect of identity.

This policy applies to all community members, including campers, staff, and parents/guardians. Respectful communication is always the expectation. We will not tolerate angry outbursts, intimidation, or abusive language directed at our staff.

### **Behaviour That Will Lead to Immediate Dismissal**

The following behaviours are grounds for immediate dismissal from camp, with no refund or credit issued. Camp staff will assess each situation and make the final decision. This includes, and is not limited to:

- Possession or use of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, alcohol, marijuana, or illicit drugs.
- Possession of weapons or any other item deemed dangerous by staff.
- Physical violence or threats of violence.

- Sexual harassment or any form of sexual misconduct.
- Our Camp Staff will make the decision to dismiss a camper if it is felt that their conduct puts the camper, other campers or our staff members at risk, or comprises the safety of the camp in any way.

## **Behaviour That May Lead to Dismissal**

The following behaviours may result in immediate dismissal depending on severity, context, and whether behaviour persists despite staff support. This includes, and is not limited to:

- Bullying, teasing, harassment, or swearing.
- Acts of aggression, practical jokes, or invasion of personal space.
- Disrespect toward campers, staff, or volunteers.
- Discrimination or harassment based on: Age, race, ethnic origin, colour, ancestry, or place of origin, religion or creed, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, disability or family status, body size, physical appearance, or any personal characteristic
- Romantic or sexual relationships between campers. While close friendships are encouraged, romantic involvement is not appropriate in our camp setting. Counsellors may use such situations as teachable moments to discuss consent, boundaries, and respect.
- Theft, borrowing others' belongings without permission.
- Vandalism or defacing property. Families will be billed for repair or replacement, including labour.
- Tampering with safety equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, smoke alarms).
- Leaving camp boundaries or visiting other cabins without permission.
- Leaving one's cabin after lights-out without notifying a counsellor.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Campers may not bring or use cell phones at camp. This policy helps promote face-to-face connection and full participation in camp life. If a camper brings a cellphone or any other technology with them to camp (i.e. Nintendo switch, apple watch, iPod, gaming systems etc....) it will be confiscated and held in the camp office, then returned to the camper on departure day.

## **Behaviour Support Process**

We believe that campers learn best through guidance, reflection, and support. Our approach is progressive and compassionate, with the goal of helping campers grow while maintaining a safe and respectful community. The behaviour support process will be undertaken with minor behavioural challenges and does not apply to behaviours that are eligible for immediate dismissal.

### **Step One: Coaching Conversation**

If a camper's behaviour violates our code or raises concern beyond what cabin staff can manage, a senior staff member will meet with them.

This respectful conversation:

- Explains how the behaviour affects others
- Offers clear examples and expectations
- Focuses on growth, not blame ("Hard on issues, soft on people")

### **Step Two: Written Notice of Ongoing Behavioural Issue**

If the behaviour continues:

- A written notice of the ongoing behavioural issue will be prepared and shared with the camper's parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to speak with a staff member about the behavioural issue.
- Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to speak with their camper.

### **Step Three: Parent/Guardian Meeting**

If problematic behaviour persists:

- A call will be held with the camper's parent(s)/guardian(s), and key staff, with the parents/guardians having the opportunity to speak with their camper.
- While the parent/guardian meeting is being held, the camper may be removed from their group for the time being.
- Staff will review the situation and steps taken.
- If ongoing participation is no longer possible, arrangements will be made for the camper to return home.
- The final decision to send a camper home is made by the Summer Camp Director in consultation with summer camp staff.

### **Step Four: Departure and Closure**

If a camper is sent home:

- The departure will be handled with care and empathy.
- A staff member will help the camper understand the decision and offer encouragement for future learning and growth.

**Final Note**

We recognize that each camper is unique and may need different types of support. Our goal is to help all children succeed—but we must also protect the safety, well-being of our wider camp community. By working together, we create a camp culture that nurtures belonging, joy and growth for everyone.

Last Reviewed: September 2025