

Safe Environment Policy for Bandina Christian Youth Camp, Inc.

INTRODUCTION TO CAMP POLICY

Our aim is to ensure a safe place where children and youth as well as adults are cared for and protected. Since there has been a rash of child abuse and child molestation in the nation, we are aware of the danger and determined to take steps to prevent such in this camp. The purpose of this policy is to address the volunteer workers. Our goal is to comply with the Texas Youth Camp Safety and Health Act which rules relating to Directors, Supervisors, and Staff are attached and made a part hereof hereto.

It is the policy of BCYC that no one who is a registered sex offender shall be allowed to serve in any capacity at any of the camp sessions. Each session director will ensure this policy is implemented by checking each prospective staff member against the registered sex offender list. Retained information should not include confidential information such as social security numbers of driver's license numbers.

It is the policy of BCYC that each director should obtain a criminal background check on all prospective staff members to determine if they have ever been convicted of a felony criminal offense. Although a felony conviction does not automatically disqualify the prospect, the director should obtain information on the nature of the offense and present the prospect to the Board President for consideration and approval by the Personnel Committee of the Board.

The following policy procedures are not based on a lack of trust in staff members and volunteer workers, but are intended to protect our camps workers and campers. Careful and confidential documentation is essential to show we are in compliance with the state mandate.

DEFINITION AND TERMINOLOGY

1. Child abuse and child molestation are criminal behavior.
2. Child abuse/child molestation is any sexual activity with a child by an adult or by a child at least four years older than the victim.
3. Child abuse and child molestation include the following:
 - Fondling
 - Oral, genital and anal penetration
 - Intercourse
 - Forcible rape
 - Allowing children to witness sexual activity
 - Incest
 - Verbal abuse – any verbal act that humiliates or threatens a child or youth
 - Obscene phone calls
 - Exhibitionism

SCREENING FOR STAFF MEMBERS

1. Obtain the application of the person applying to serve on the staff.
2. Obtain recommendations from elders, preacher, or others in leadership positions in the congregation where the applicant regularly attends.
3. A criminal conviction and sex offender registration record check will be made on all staff members.
4. A personal review will be conducted by the director and his decision will be final with the exception of convicted felons who must be approved by the Personnel Committee of the Board.

TRAINING

1. All staff members must undergo a training procedure lasting not less than one hour.
2. A training program approved by Texas Department of Health Services for youth camps must be used.
3. The training and examination program must include the following subjects:
 - The definitions and effects of sexual abuse and child molestation.
 - The typical pattern of behavior and methods of operation of child molesters and sexual offenders that puts children at risk.
 - The warning signs and symptoms and the recommended method of reporting suspected abusers.
 - The recommended rules and procedures for youth camps that address, reduce, prevent, and report suspected sexual abuse or child molestation.
 - Training shall include the need to minimize one-on-one isolated encounters between an adult and a minor or between two minors.
 - The examination must consist of not less than 25 questions covering the required subject and a grade of 70%.

RESPONDING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

1. Every member of the staff is legally responsible for reporting known and reasonable suspected child abuse and child molestation.
2. All cases of alleged child abuse and child molestation will be taken seriously and acted upon.
3. The care and safety of the victim is the first priority, therefore any person receiving an allegation should report to the director.
4. All cases of child abuse or child molestation will be reported to the proper law officials.

COMPLIANCE

1. Every staff member including the director is responsible for carrying out the provisions of this policy.
2. All staff members including the director must familiarize themselves with and abide by the provisions of this policy.
3. The goal of this policy is to prevent abuse and molestation of children and youth.

4. Test results will be confidential and kept in a secure location on-site at the camp.
5. A minimum of two counselors are to be assigned to each cabin for the protection of both counselors and campers.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES

1. Plan programs and activities to keep campers busy, this helps to prevent possibility of trouble.
2. Daily staff meetings are very valuable to keep check on how well the camp is operating and to plan for the next day.
 - This is a great time to consider changes that perhaps should be made.
 - It offers an excellent opportunity for fun and fellowship.
 - A time to get acquainted and appreciate one another.
3. Be sure that no campers are left out.
4. Never forget that camp is for the campers.

RECORDS RETENTION

All applications, background check reports, training documentation, and other required personnel documentation required by these rules shall be maintained in hard copy or electronic format on-site at the camp for a minimum of two years following a person's last day of service. The camp manager will be responsible for insuring the confidentiality of the retained information. Care should be given to deleting social security numbers and driver's license numbers before storing the documentation.