



● Empower ● Connect ● Care ●

# **STAFF HANDBOOK**

**JUNE 2019 – MAY 2020**

# ZEBRA CROSSINGS STAFF HANDBOOK

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## I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome and thank you for joining the Zebra Crossings staff team! This staff manual is your guide for staff training information that you need in preparation for all programs. Staff refers to every position within the organization whether it is a paid or a volunteer position. Camper refers to every child who participates in any of our programs.

Our goal is for every participant to have a fun, safe, quality experience, and we appreciate your support to help make that happen! A successful camp/program experience actually begins with the staff team, their dedication and their passion for the mission of the program. We look forward to working with you and creating a powerful experience for our kids together.

### I.1. MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES

**Our mission** is to enrich the lives of children with a chronic medical condition, including those at risk of developing a chronic medical condition by fostering greater self-confidence, a sense of independence and a desire to realize their full potential through fun and engaging empowerment programs that build a strong and caring community support network for families.

**Vision:** The overall well-being of children with a chronic medical condition and their families has improved, as they:

- Approach life with greater confidence.
- Experience a sense of optimism and preparedness.
- Take responsibility for their own health and make healthy choices.
- Pro-actively seek opportunities to achieve their goals.
- Feel supported by a community network of peers.

#### Core Values

- **Play:** I can play and have fun together with other kids who have a chronic medical condition. This is a place where I am safe.
- **Achievement:** I can try new things and set goals for myself at camp. I understand that sometimes I may need help achieving my goals or breaking my goals into smaller pieces.
- **Wellness:** I will make choices that are healthy for my mind, my body, and my spirit. I can learn new ways of managing my chronic medical condition.
- **Independence:** I will take care of myself, my belongings, and my health. I will try to do things on my own knowing that others will support me if I ask.
- **Community:** Being part of a community means I am committed to giving my best, supporting others, and respecting differences. Through a strong community, we will all accomplish more than we would as an individual.

## **I.2. COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS**

1. Our core values and program outcomes should guide us in our work with campers.
2. The needs of campers and the interest and desires of parents must always be of primary concern. We are a role model for the campers in our care.
3. Maintain safety and quality as primary concerns. Maintaining appropriate levels of supervision is a first step in safety. The 6:1 camper to staff ratio should be in place for all program activities.
4. Campers and staff should feel safe, valued and respected. Please be sure your words, tone and actions toward campers and staff are respectful. If you encounter a situation where an individual is not being treated with respect, please intervene.
5. Provide safe, quality experiences for campers and conduct regular checks of all program spaces and equipment.
6. If you find something in disrepair or unsafe, please remove it from use. Notify your Designated Program Leader of any risk management concerns.
7. All staff are expected to participate in program activities, meals, etc.
8. All staff should participate in the care of our community – including dishes, general upkeep of grounds, program clean up, and keeping personal living spaces clean and neat.
9. Provide support for each other. This may involve covering for another staff person during a meal, running an activity, or walking someone to the medical staff or bathroom.
10. Timeliness: we are part of a team and people are counting on you to arrive at activities on time and prepared.
11. Record and report any incidents, accidents, or near misses incurred during programs.
12. Use your time off wisely and make time for rest and renewal. Taking care of yourself is taking care of your campers. Staff are expected to get enough sleep, eat a healthy balanced diet, drink plenty of water, wear sunscreen, and dress appropriately for the weather and activity.
13. Honest and direct communication is essential to the success of our team. Please share concerns, ideas and feedback in a timely manner. Assume the best of others. We are all going to make mistakes, and we may be misperceived at times, so communication is key.
14. Maintain a sense of humor and have fun. Play a lot!
15. Give your best to the community, and you will have a rewarding experience!

### **Health and Wellness Responsibilities**

As a staff, we all share in the health and wellness of our camp community. This involves taking care of ourselves, as well as monitoring the health of our campers. Please keep in mind:

1. Remind campers to go to the Medical Team before and after meals to take their medications.
2. Emergency medical needs are managed by the highest certification. This will usually be a member of the Medical Team. If multiple medical needs occur, please assist with triage. Identify the best resource available. E.g. An EMT can assist with traumatic injuries, inhalers and checks for low blood sugars and seizures. The medical staff needs to administer all other medications and insulin.
3. Supplies for minor first aid (such as abrasions) are found in medical kit front pockets. If the medical team is busy assessing a camper, please get the supplies and provide care to your camper.

4. The first response for a headache is to drink water! Drink plenty of water and make sure your campers are drinking plenty of water. We should all try to drink a minimum of 3 bottles per day to prevent dehydration resulting in tiredness, nausea, headaches, irritability.
5. Stomach aches often occur because a participant needs to have a bowel movement, is hungry, ate too much, or is nervous about a situation. Ask participants questions and treat accordingly. Send participant to the medical team if you are unsure how to treat.
6. Sunscreen is a must, and participants need reminders. Have participants apply sunscreen before open field and waterfront activities. Sunscreen is available in the medical kit. Ensure that others are not inhaling the sunscreen as a participant applies it. Check for any allergies BEFORE providing sunscreen to a participant.
7. Supervise participants putting on bug spray. Ensure that others are not inhaling the bug spray as a participant applies it. Participants should be reminded to apply bug spray before evening/night activities. Send participants to the medical team if bites become scabbed to prevent infection.
8. Handwashing, Handwashing, Handwashing! Seriously encourage this after the bathroom. All participants and staff must wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating/handling food. More details in Dietary & Food allergies protocol.
9. Poison Ivy spreads quickly especially in hot weather. Treat it promptly with soap and hot water. Wash hands after suspected contact to prevent spread. Participants must remove any article of clothing that is suspected to have poison ivy on it. Any clothes that have suspected contact need to be washed in hot water or placed in a closed bag to go home with participant
10. Tiredness is worth monitoring – in both participants and you. Encourage wise use of easy time. Ask for help if you are fatigued yourself.
11. Blood borne Pathogens Protocols – Gloves and CPR masks are located in all first aid kits. Gloves should be worn when cleaning potentially infectious materials (including cleaning up after vomit and bedwetting), handling soiled laundry, and rendering first aid/CPR. A “sharps” container is available with the medical team kit or health lodge for disposal. Place regulated waste other than sharps in the appropriately labeled disposal bags in first aid kits.
12. If you have concerns regarding unhealthy or potentially harmful behaviors of a participant or fellow staff member, please report it to your supervisor (ex. Eating disorder, cutting).

### **I.3. POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

Each staff member is asked to sign a position description listing primary responsibilities. If you have questions about any assignment, please seek clarification from your supervisor.

#### **Responsibilities of each staff member**

- Be loyal to Zebra Crossings, always exercising your energy in the interest of Zebra Crossings participants, fellow staff and community
- Be informed about Zebra Crossings’ mission, vision, policies, and programs.
- Work with the staff team to oversee the safety and well-being of program participants.
- Be an avid proponent of the mission, and inform others about Zebra Crossings, its mission, vision and programs.
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity, and communicate concerns to senior staff or if needed to a board member.

- Provide candid and constructive advice, comments and criticism. Ask timely and substantive questions when unsure about your role, responsibilities and or ZC policies.
- Maintain confidentiality of participants' personal information.
- Perform duties to the best of your ability; willingly participate in assigned activities or duties.
- Provide positive energy and attitude to the program or event.
- Prepare for, attend, and participate actively in program planning meetings.
- Be on time: communicate delays or absences as soon as possible.

## **2. PROGRAM**

### **2.1. PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

At Zebra Crossings, we want all our participants to have a fun, safe, quality experience. We believe in order to have fun and learn, children need to be and feel safe physically and emotionally. Participants and staff work together to create a safe environment. In our actions and guidance of participants we aim to instill intentional learning objectives and consistent messages.

We believe that our participants will leave our program with:

- Greater self-confidence and sense of independence
- Inspiration to live life to the fullest
- Desire to seek opportunities and to achieve goals
- Awareness to take responsibility for their health
- New friendships and a lasting support community.

### **2.2. Program Schedules and Logistics**

Program schedules vary greatly upon season, location, number of participants. Staff members will receive a copy of the schedule and an orientation to their role and assignments. For all programs the following processes should be as consistent as possible.

#### **Arrival & Check in procedure:**

- Upon arrival at a program, a senior staff member will greet the families and direct them to the appropriate medical staff for check-in.
- Medical staff will collect medications and receive final instructions about a child's health status.
- Participant says goodbye to adult at the registration area. Adults are asked to refrain from entering the program area unless it is critical and approved by senior staff or medical staff.
- Participant needs to wash hands (or use wipe) prior to entering program area.
- Participant needs to drop off their belongings in the appropriate storage area.

### **Departure & Check out procedure:**

- Adult will be greeted by senior staff or medical staff at the pickup area and they will confirm if the adult is authorized for pick up on the participant form. Staff may ask an adult to show identification if ZC staff is not familiar with the adult.
- Participant packs own belongings in storage area and walks over to registration/pick up area to greet adults. Adults are encouraged to verify if all belongings are packed.
- Parents collect medications from the medical staff.

**NOTE:** If participants are picked up prior to the program closing, a staff member may not release the participant without approval of senior staff and/or medical staff.

### **Bathrooms, Changing and Splitting Groups:**

- Participants need to be supervised by an adult at all times and often this means escorting them to a bathroom.
- Always travel in groups of at least three which consists of at least one adult or LIT with at least two participants. Do a head count prior to leaving for the bathroom and notify your fellow group leader about the number of kids you are escorting.
- Stage yourself at the exit of the bathroom/changing room and conduct a head count prior to leaving the bathrooms/changing room.
- When you are splitting a group of children in your care, do a head count and confirm how many children are your responsibility.
- A few campers may require assistance with changing. Often this has been requested by the parent. Generally senior staff will provide that support. If asked and you are not comfortable taking on this role, please let your supervisor know in advance.
- Assistance with changing needs should happen in an area where others are around and can hear you. Shower stalls that are not fully enclosed are ideal. Never be alone in a (bath) room with a participant.
- Note: staff will change either in separate area from participants or at a different time from participants. Often this is done in shifts to maintain appropriate supervision levels.

### **2.3. PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS**

Staff are responsible for ensuring that participants understand and act within the following participant expectations.

- Follow all safety rules given to you by your activity leader (including Leader In Training)
- Treat everyone and everything with respect, including you, others, other people's belongings and the environment.
- Use positive and affirming language.
- Be nice and inclusive of others.
- Be open to new experiences and trying everything.
- Assist others when you can and if it is wanted.
- Stay in camp boundaries and on the trails.
- Stay where you are if you are lost.
- Stay with your group
- Wear shoes unless it is an approved "shoe-free" activity.

- Respect the environment and leave it cleaner than you found it.
- Come to the Meeting Center when you hear the whistle
- Engage in waterfront activities only with staff approval
- Be safe, ask if you are not sure or need help
  - No alcohol, tobacco, illegal drug use or abuse of prescription drugs (send-home violations)
  - No matches, fires, weapons, fireworks

## 2.4. PROGRAM OPERATING PROCEDURES

### General Program Supervision and Ratios

Appropriate supervision is the best way to prevent behavior issues and insure a positive camp experience. ZC programs maintain a 6:1 participant to staff ratio. Exceptions to this ratio may occur during low risk interest groups located in central camp, some night time supervision during a leader day off, and emergency situations on-trail where one leader needs to accompany a participant to seek medical treatment. As a rule, staff should never be 1 on 1 with a participant in any private space. This includes living spaces and program spaces. As mentioned above one-on-one conversations should take place out in the open, visible to other participants and/or staff. A minimum of two staff must be present during missing participant searches, when a participant is packing their belongings for early departure/dismissal and any time a participant is acting in an aggravated, irrational and/or dangerous manner.

During free time, staff are assigned certain areas of camp/program to supervise and engage with participants. You may choose activities you would like to lead, and staff will also be assigned to oversee high traffic activity. Remember that staff must insert when words or actions are in conflict with our community values or could harm a camper. ***If campers are struggling to initiate an engaging activity, it is the responsibility of the staff to organize an activity.*** Whether it is in a structured activity or passing time between interest groups, please follow all behavior management procedures to help us create fun, safe programs and camps for our participants.

### Participant Safety in Public Areas

- When in public places, Zebra Crossings staff and volunteers will be in direct contact with participants at all times. Each cabin leader/facilitator will be responsible for their participants either by direct supervision or delegation to another staff member.
- In the event of separation from the group, the children are instructed to go to the Meeting Center. A “Meeting Center” will be established at each location. If the camper cannot get to the Meeting Center on their own, then seek an adult who works at the facility we are visiting, give them their name and the group they are with and ask for assistance in locating our group leaders.
- Participants approached by a stranger are to ignore the stranger.
- When using public streets, participants will stay together under staff supervision. When using public restrooms, staff/volunteers will accompany the participants to ensure safety.
- A head count will be done each time a group leaves one area AND each time the group arrives at another area



## **Activity Operating Procedures**

Zebra Crossings will honor local operating procedures for any program activity that falls under the responsibility of the hosting program facility. This may include, but not limited to, ropes courses, climbing towers, canoeing, swimming, and/or archery. In those circumstances, the staff of the hosting facility will be leading the activity and ZC staff and participants are expected to follow and support the directions given.

NOTE: If for any reason, a ZC staff member is uncomfortable with the safety of the activity or the wellbeing of a participant, you need to intervene and stop the activity. Contact a ZC senior staff member to discuss the concern prior to proceeding.

For any new adventure based activity (such as climbing, horseback riding, camping trips) that Zebra Crossings plans, leads and supervises, the Designated Program Leader will assess activity procedures that need to be created and implement those through staff training.

## **2.5. SWIMMING PROCEDURES**

Campers and staff may swim during designated times. Any other use of the waterfront/pool must be approved by the senior staff and staff/participants must follow policies and procedures outlined in this manual. All participants will take part in an orientation session and have their swimming ability evaluated by the hosting facility lifeguards or ZC senior staff before participating in any aquatic activities.

**Camper Swim Evaluations:** On the first day of camp/program, participants will be given an orientation and swimming assessment. The orientation of the waterfront/pool consists of: the swimming rules and the swim tag system. Participants' swimming skills are assessed. Staff is careful to detect non-swimmers and have them do alternative assessment in water that is no higher than chest level of the participant. Note is taken of these participants and they are only allowed to swim without the use of a life jacket in areas where the water is below their chest. The swim assessment varies with each location. We will abide by the protocol of each hosting facility. Participants can request to be re-assessed later in the week if they have practiced their swim skills and have gained confidence at camp.

## **STAFF ROLES**

Staff are expected to be prepared to get into the water at any time, if needed, during scheduled water activities. Swimming is a time to have fun and form connections with participants. When campers are swimming in areas above their heads, it is preferred that at least one staff person be in the water with those swimmers or supervising from the shore/dock. During swim time, it is required that all staff be engaged with participants, while still maintaining a vigilant look out.

**Facilities with Lifeguard Staff:** In most settings where ZC participants are swimming in a busy public location, a lifeguard of that facility is on duty. Participants need to follow the guidelines of that facility. ZC staff will act as Aquatic Observers (see below) in facilities with Lifeguard Staff.

### **Facilities without Lifeguard Staff:**

- Designate a ZC Aquatic Supervisor (DAS): The DAS is a staff member who is a current or previous certified lifeguard, and holds CPR certification. S/he is responsible for the coordination and supervision of guards and observers. The DAS will be positioned with the rescue tube at a location where s/he can oversee all participants in the water.
- Restrict the swim area (either through swim lines, natural boundaries, or staff supervision marking outer boundaries) AND
- Water is below chest level of campers AND
- Number of swimmers is less than 25 campers at a time AND
- The number of “general public” swimmers mixing with campers in this swim area is limited for easy head counts.

**Aquatic Observers:** Staff persons who hold current CPR certification and have gone through aquatic observer training. This training includes waterfront policies and procedures, basic, non-swimming rescues (i.e. reaching assists). Under the direct supervision of the designated aquatic supervisor, aquatic observers act as an additional set of eyes watching swimmers and boaters, make phone calls, and can support waterfront staff in the case of an emergency.

- Aquatic observers will carry 2 flotation assist devices (e.g. pool noodles) at all times which can only be used by campers who are in distress and need support leaving the swim area.
- One aquatic observer is located in the shallow end of the swim area and will manage the location tag system and maintain a count of the number of swimmers in the water. AND
- One aquatic observer is located in or beside water that is chest deep for the majority of participants. This observer serves as the boundary for all swimmers. This aquatic observer will bring a flotation device(s) with them, that they can provide to participants in case of fatigue and/or struggle.

### **Swim Tags**

Each participant will have a tag with their name on it on the swim tag board. This board is stationed with one staff member. Before entering the water, the participant will place their swim tag to the appropriate “swim” position. The “swim” positions may change to most appropriately coincide with the site being used. Some locations may simply denote “in” and “out” of the water. Other locations may specify “deep” “shallow” “slide” and “boating”. When a participant leaves the water or swim area they need to move their swim tag to the correct position. Participants who are not swimming need to stay in supervised areas, usually near the swim tag station.

## **SWIMMING RULES**

- Do not swim unless the waterfront has been opened officially by the Designated Aquatic Supervisor (DAS)
- Always use the swim tag system moving it to the “out of water” side, or new swim section, when you move to different areas, including when swim time is over.
- No horseplay (dunking, pushing, hitting, throwing sand, etc.)
- Swim only in designated areas
- No diving unless approved and in water that is 9ft deep
- No running near the pool area especially on decks and docks
- No swimming under docks or other such structures
- No flips off of dock or raft
- No swimming at night
- No sitting on the ladders or lane lines
- No climbing/hanging on other participants/staff UNLESS it is to provide respite to a participant in water that is deeper than their chest. The supporting person must be in water chest deep or lower.
- Waterfront Staff reserves the right to prohibit any unsafe behavior
- Participants must wait for permission to leave waterfront. This is to ensure all swim tag tags are moved and every participant is accounted for.

### **Aquatic Supervision Positioning and Coverage**

Aquatic supervision placement varies, depending on which areas the swimmers are using. Generally, there will be staff placed on each end of the swim area.

A ratio of one lifeguard or designated aquatic supervisor to 25 campers participating in waterfront activities will be maintained at all times. In addition, there must be one staff member trained as an aquatic observer for every 10 campers participating in water activities. The DAS will add and relieve staff as necessary based on the swim areas being used and number of swimmers. A minimum of two staff must be on duty during waterfront activities. One must be a DAS and the other must be trained as an aquatics observer.

Staff will not guard consecutively for more than one hour. The DAS is supervising the guards and instructors to ensure they are prepared, positioned and performing adequately.

### **Guarding Rules**

- Arrive at least 5 minutes before your assigned duties to assist the DAS in the inspection and survey of all equipment and environmental conditions.
- Dress suitably to enter the water and act in an emergency situation
- Wear sunglasses and sunscreen
- Carry a rescue tube and whistle while on duty
- Practice life guarding skills whenever possible - participate in in-service trainings when called for by waterfront coordinator
- Guards shall not engage in an activity that will distract them from their duties
- Be actively attentive and alert at all times
- Notify DAS if in need of assistance or relief

## Head Counts and Whistle Signals

“Head counts” will be called at least every 15 minutes during swim time in settings when the swim area is crowded with people not involved with Zebra Crossings. Swimmers must swim to the nearest dock, landline, or raft and must remain quiet and still as lifeguards/DAS count the number of swimmers. This number must be compared to the number of swim tag tags on the board. The swimmers are to remain quiet and still until the “all clear” signal is given. At any indication of a lost swimmer, the DAS will initiate the Lost Swimmer Procedures. During swim time if there are less than 25 campers swimming, the DAS may keep track of the number of campers down at the waterfront/pool; without doing official “Head Counts”.

The following whistle signals should be used by the DAS when necessary:

- One short whistle blow: get the attention of swimmer(s) to enforce rules
- Two short whistle blow: head counts
- Three whistle blows: indication of an emergency; participants need to freeze upon hearing this and wait for further instructions; other guards/DAS will be alerted to assist in rescue.
- One long whistle: indication that the interest group is over and waterfront participants can begin heading to the shore.

At the end of a swim session the participants will be asked to leave the water, put away any toys or equipment they have been using and move their swim tag to “Out of Water”. The DAS will be sure the following procedures happen before leaving the waterfront:

- All swimmers have left the waterfront, and if any swim tags remain, the missing swimmer procedures are followed
- Equipment and toys are put away

## 2.6. BOATING PROCEDURES

Several boating activities, including kayaking, canoeing, and paddle boarding may be available at some program facilities. If the hosting facility leads the activity, Zebra Crossings campers and staff will follow their guidelines.

- ZC staff needs to be present in a 1:4 ratio which may include the medical staff or staff from the hosting facility.
- ZC medical staff (RN/EMT) needs to be in the front and back of the boating group with a maximum distance of 200 feet.

If Zebra Crossings leads the activity, at least one staff person with knowledge of the boating activity must evaluate campers’ ability and placement. At least one staff member needs to have documented boating instruction experience including rescue techniques. The instruction of all boating activities cover boarding and debarking, movement of the craft, the use of PFD’s, and self-rescue in case of capsizing.

## **Boating Guards**

Boat guards may be appointed to the boating activity. The DAS may decide to watch the boats or designate a specific boat guard if it is busy. Boat guards supervise boating activities and notify staff members of any problems or need for rescue.

The boat guard, who may or may not be the one helping with the launching of boats, will carry binoculars and frequently scan all boats for any signs of problems. Boaters are instructed to wave their paddles in the case of distress and boat guards will watch for these signals. Boat guards will keep an accurate count of how many boats and boaters are on the water and notify the DAS of and problems or missing boats/boaters.

## **Personal Flotation Device (PFD) and Safety Policies**

- All boaters **must wear PFD's at all times** while on the water. PFD's are checked to be in good condition.
- NO careless activities such as swamping, tipping or swimming from the crafts
- All crafts must return promptly when whistle is blown three times.
- All gear must be stowed properly and damaged equipment must be brought to the attention of the waterfront staff
- When the thunder is heard, staff will blow whistle three times. All boaters need to seek shelter in a safe spot anywhere off the lake as quickly as possible.
- Understand and follow the rules specific to your boating activity

## **2.7. DIETARY AND FOOD ALLERGIES PROTOCOLS**

Many of the children that attend Zebra Crossings programs have food allergies. Most of these are minor and do not pose a significant danger during camp, especially if the foods are eaten at home without problems. However, there are usually a few children who have a history of significant food sensitivity. Although Zebra Crossings cannot guarantee parents that our programs are 100% free of their child's allergens, we have put the following protocols in place to minimize the risk.

Zebra Crossings is a "nut aware" program, which means we ask all staff and campers to not bring ANY items containing any type of nut. If you notice an item in a lunch bag, please tell the camper you will put it in storage with the medical staff until pick up. If you notice a camper eating such an item, please ask them to step away from the group, supervise them while they finish eating it and have them wash their hands or use a wipe. Advise the medical team, so they can bring this to the attention of the parents at pick up.

### **Guidelines for meals/snacks in day programs:**

- Campers bring their own food & snacks - No sharing of food/snacks
- No "playing" with food/snacks and immediately clean up spills
- Any food that is part of the program needs to be reviewed with parents for approval.
- Any food/snacks that is given to a camper as an exception (as they forgot to bring food), needs to be approved by the medical team.

**Guidelines for overnight programs:**

The most common and potentially dangerous food allergies encountered at camp are milk, egg, gluten and peanut. The allergic reactions associated with these four foods, particularly peanuts, can be quite severe in certain children. For overnight camp, it is advised that no peanuts of any type, or any item containing peanuts, be used by the hosting camp kitchen for cooking, or be available at camp. Milk, wheat and eggs are acceptable foods to use at camp, but food allergy patients should always be alerted to dishes that contain these ingredients. A sign or an announcement should be made at every meal. Other precautions may be necessary to protect the allergic child from milk and egg exposure.

On rare occasion a camper, due to significant food allergies, will bring their own food to camp. The camp director, medical staff and the camp cook must approve this in advance. Careful planning is necessary to ensure the camper has ample food for daily meals and snacks.

**Pre-Admission Steps:**

- While reviewing the camper's application before camp, clarify details of previous reactions with the parent and provide accurate documentation for the camper's chart.
- Discuss specific allergies with the parents, our protocols and limitations to control every risk of cross contamination.

**At Camp:**

- All campers and staff need to wash their hands with soap and water upon arrival at camp. If running water is not available, campers may use hand wipes.
- For sanitation and hygiene purposes: campers need to wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to eating.
- Post meal/snacks, campers need to first pack up their food items and then wash their hands or use wipes before starting play
- Staff need to monitor what kids are eating. Ask in playful way what they brought.

**3. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT****3.1. BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES**

Supervisors and directors are here to assist all staff/volunteers. Please notify them of any behavioral issue when it starts to arise. Camp Director will contact parents for severe behavioral issues requiring immediate pickup. For minor incidents, Camp Director will speak with parents at the end of the day about consequences and last warning.

You may not hit, touch, or yell at a camper in anger; if you are angry at a camper, take a deep breath, take a break and get some help from another staff person.

## **Positive Behavior Strategies**

- Ask the child what is bothering them or how can you help them
- Clearly state the behavior you expect and what you expect to stop
- Look for patterns: if the child struggles at the same point on a regular basis, consider changing the activity
- State what the child is doing well and why you want them to continue to be at camp
- Find alternative ways to meet the need
- State the consequences for continued behavior
- Praise the desired behavior
- Model appropriate behavior and do the right thing yourself
- Set a good example
- Ignore attention seeking behaviors
- Directly address behaviors that put others at risk
- Ask for help **before** you need it
- Use eye contact and stand close to the camper when discussing serious issues
- Be careful not to humiliate the camper in front of his/her friends
- Don't lecture---keep it short and direct
- Give brief, logical consequences and allow natural consequences to occur
- Get assistance from another staff member
- Use peer support when appropriate---ask for feedback
- Treat the campers and staff as you would like to be treated
- Always respect confidentiality - keep private things private
- Involve those who need to know

## **Common Behaviors of Concern**

- Bullying, badgering, belittling, teasing, tormenting, and harassing are serious problems and should be addressed immediately.
- Watch for practical jokes that are out of control.
- Watch for unwanted romantic advances.
- A protocol exists to help you with repeated problems or dangerous behavior. Enlist the help of a senior staff member to begin this process.

## **Behavior that Could Result in Immediate Dismissal**

The following is a list of some behaviors, but certainly not limited to, that could result in immediate dismissal of a camper:

1. Violence towards another camper or staff/volunteer
2. Violence towards self
3. Emotional/verbal cruelty to another camper or staff/volunteer
4. Running away
5. Refusing to be in designated areas/stay with group
6. Theft
7. Reckless and dangerous use of any equipment and/or locations (i.e. waterfront, archery)
8. Destroying property belonging to others
9. Use and/or sales of alcohol, illegal drugs and abuse of prescription drugs

## **DEALING WITH PROBLEM BEHAVIOR**

**Step 1:** Discuss the behaviors of concern with the camper and use the strategies from the Positive Behavior Strategies list. This should include logical consequences and discussion with a senior staff member.

**Step 2:** If the behavior continues, develop a behavior contract with the camper. This form is available from the Designated Program Leader and is meant to be developed with their input and support.

**Step 3:** If this does not resolve the problem, follow the steps on the behavior contract that may include sending the camper home.

### **3.2. DISMISSAL POLICY**

If a participant's actions, statements, or attitudes negatively impact the program, creating issues that compromise safety and fun, our Designated Program Leader will address the concern. For most issues, parents will be contacted and we will try to work together to create a plan that will help the participant finish the program. The Camp Director will remain in contact with the parents and assess the next step. If the issues continue, the participant will be dismissed.

If a participant is physically, mentally, socially, or emotionally unprepared to engage in activities, the Program Coordinator may adapt your child's activities for that program. Zebra Crossings staff will contact you after the program to discuss future program participation with you.

**Dismissal Policy:** It is never easy to reach the decision that a camper should be dismissed, and we know it is a difficult thing for parents to hear. Behaviors that result in immediate dismissal include but are not limited to - threat to harm self or others, possession or use of drugs or alcohol, or possession of a weapon. If a camper's actions, statements, or attitude continue to negatively impact the community, or if a camper is physically, mentally, socially, or emotionally unprepared for camp activities, they will be dismissed.

When a camper is dismissed, it is essential that parents make arrangements for their child to return home as soon as possible. Parents are responsible for any costs associated with transportation home.





## 4. STAFF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

The manufacture, distribution, transfer, possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or alcohol or misuse/abuse of prescription drugs is prohibited at any Zebra Crossings program. Intoxication is not acceptable behavior in or around a program location and campers, whether or not a staff member is on a day off, and regardless of an individual's legal right to drink. Staff returning from time off **must** do so in a condition fit for work with no physical evidence of intoxication. This policy is based on the need to assure:

- Our parents that alcohol/drugs are not used by staff when they supervise their children
- Our staff that there is equal treatment among all staff
- Campers that we are modeling behavior that is consistent with our policies and that staff responsible for their experience are able to exercise good judgment regarding their care.

It is expected that staff behavior will conform to state laws, including the consumption of alcohol. The use or possession of illegal drugs (including alcohol for those under legal drinking age) and misuse/abuse of prescription drugs on or off camp property is against ZC policy.

**Violation of the Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, and Prescription Drugs policy is grounds for immediate dismissal.** This policy also applies to all participants in ZC programs. If you know, or suspect, that any participant(s) are in violation of this policy, you should notify the Camp Director immediately.

ZC may test, at its expense, for any drugs, alcohol, or other prohibited or controlled substances where ZC supervision has reasonable suspicion of employee use. Positive test results, as well as refusal to abide by all testing procedures, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. Drug testing will take place at a nearby testing center selected by ZC, and the employee will be transported to the location by ZC staff. To provide the most accurate testing results possible, ZC will work with certified laboratories which have a clear chain of custody for the sample and the results so tampering is not possible. The lab will make sure both a confirmatory and an initial test are performed on the sample. If an employee tests positive for drug use, he or she has the right to request a re-test.

### American with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of ZC to comply with all the relevant and applicable provisions of the ADA and applicable state disabilities laws. Any employee with a disability who feels that they need an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of their job should notify their supervisor. The supervisor, with Human Resources, will explore the availability of reasonable accommodations which do not present an undue hardship on ZC.

### Automobiles

Staff are responsible for their own transportation. Please respect that most program locations are pedestrian sites only. Zebra Crossings cannot be responsible for their security, for accidents, or from problems resulting from their use. Vehicles brought to the program should have full and proper insurance. **Participants should never be transported in personal vehicles without approval of Senior Staff.**

## **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

One of the key pieces of the ZC vision is to promote a sustainable relationship between people and the natural environment. Our goal is to be as environmentally friendly as possible in our practices as well as in our programming.

## **Candy, Gum and Other Treats**

We invite all staff and campers to adopt a voluntary simplicity when living at camp. Part of this simplicity is a focus on a healthy diet. Candy, gum and other treats can create safety issues for our campers with potentially life threatening allergies, and create group inequities. If you personally enjoy candy or gum, please do so out of the sight of campers. In other words, staff should not be chewing gum while teaching activities, during free time, whenever we are with campers. Staff are not permitted to have cans of soda/energy drinks or bottles of juice in visible community space.

## **Time off**

Each staff member will receive at least one hour off each day during overnight camp programs. Staff members may experience different levels of fatigue or stress based on many factors including camper behaviors, night time support of campers etc. Please talk with Senior Staff if you need an additional break or support. Please inform the Senior Staff if you leave the facility.

## **Disciplinary Process**

At Zebra Crossings, our goal is to support each member of our community to be successful. However, when issues of staff performance, actions or behavior begin to impact the quality of the program, participant experience, or work environment, action must be taken. Violations of certain policies are grounds for immediate dismissal including but not limited to: violent and unsafe behavior, harassment, threats, and intoxication. When possible the following process will be followed to allow a staff member to improve their behavior or performance.

### ***Step 1 – Verbal Corrective Action***

In correcting unacceptable performance or behavior, your supervisor will review the pertinent job requirements with you to ensure your understanding of them. This meeting will include the nature of the problem, improvement sought, the time period within which it is expected to be improved, and potential consequences (including dismissal). Documentation of the corrective action will be placed in your personnel file.

### ***Step 2 – Formal Written Warning***

At this step, a written evaluation prepared by your supervisor that again defines the problem and expected improvement will be shared with you. Consequences for continued lack of improvement will be included.

### ***Step 3 – Dismissal***

Dismissal is reserved for those cases that cannot be resolved by the corrective action or in those cases where a major violation that cannot be tolerated has occurred.

## **Dress Code**

Staff and volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for your position and the activity. Be prepared for weather changes. The concept of dress includes attentive personal grooming, neat/clean/non-ripped clothing, neatly arranged hair and good hygienic practices. Attire that would be considered unacceptable includes: t-shirts with offensive or inappropriate slogans, pictures or product advertisements for alcohol/drugs, torn clothing, bare feet, bikinis, halter tops, tight/revealing or see through clothing. Throughout the movement of activities, the clothing should provide coverage so “plunging necklines and drooping pants” are not appropriate.

Tattoo's that could be considered offensive or derogatory in nature should not be visible. Also, it is not appropriate to add a tattoo or piercing during the program season if it will impede your job function or pose a health and safety risk to yourself or others. Jewelry should be appropriate to the program activity, program community/environment, level of program responsibility and the audience with whom staff is engaging. Program supervisors will determine and manage issues that arise around inappropriate dress.

Fragrances: Staff are asked to avoid the use of fragrances from personal care products, air fresheners, candles and cleaning products while at Zebra Crossings. The use of these items have been associated with adversely affecting a person's health including headaches, upper respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, and difficulty with concentration. People with allergies and asthma report that certain odors, even in small amounts, can cause asthma symptoms.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

ZC affords equal opportunity for employment to all individuals on the basis of merit without regard to race, color, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, familial status, religion, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, physical or mental disabilities, or any other basis prohibited by law. All staff and volunteers are hereby reminded to continue to work together to eliminate any practices – including harassment – because of any protected category listed above, that might directly or indirectly exclude any individual from the quality of work life ZC values. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Fires**

Fires may only be built in designated fire rings. Staff must seek permission of Senior Staff. Smoke can create a health risk for some of our campers (especially those with asthma). No accelerants (such as white gas) may be used in starting fires.

## **Grievance Procedure**

ZC encourages employees to bring problems, complaints and concerns to the attention of supervisors right away, so that we can identify and resolve issues quickly and effectively. A grievance may include a condition of employment that appears unjust or unfair, any illegal activities or violations of ZC policy, safety hazards, or any other significant problem or issue that the staff person believes requires immediate attention. The grievance procedure includes:

1. Inform your supervisor in writing or verbally of your concern. The concern will be written up using a ZC incident form. The supervisor will bring the issue to the attention of the Executive Director, and they will work to resolve the issue and inform you of the resolution.
2. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you should bring your grievance to the Board Chair. If your grievance is with the Executive Director, you may take your grievance directly to the Board Chair with support of the Designated Program Leader.
3. The Executive Director or Board Chair will follow-up with you in a timely manner.

## **Harassment**

ZC is committed to maintaining a work, living and learning environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, we will not tolerate harassment of ZC employees or participants by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, vendor or other participants. Nor will we tolerate harassment of participants, vendors, or other, by a ZC employee while on the job.

The legal definition of harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, pregnancy, marital status, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, veteran status, or other protected group status. ZC will not tolerate harassing conduct towards anyone that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment deserves special mention. It is commonly defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other actions which implicitly or explicitly creates intimidation based on one's sex. Examples include, but are not limited to, explicit sexual propositions, sexually oriented "kidding", practical jokes, jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures. Harassment includes any verbal or physical conduct, which has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with any individual's or group's work or study, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. When behavior of a sexual nature is unwelcome, it is sexual harassment.

Another significant harassment issue is camper to camper harassment. It is essential that we as staff intervene if we see or hear anything that could be construed as camper to camper harassment. Anything that could make a camper feel unsafe, such as profanity, threatening words or actions, or physical harassment, must be addressed. Inaction on a staff person's part sends a message to the victim that you condone the threatening behavior.

Please report any incident of harassment to the Executive Director. It is ZC policy to investigate all such complaints thoroughly and promptly. We will try to keep complaints and terms of resolution confidential.

## **Medical Team**

The Medical Team's primary role is to care for the camper's in our program. Staff may visit the health lodge during regular clinic hours, but on-going medical needs are individual staff member's responsibility to manage. The names and numbers of several doctors in the area are available in the office should you need to schedule an appointment. Please talk with your Designated Program Leader prior to scheduling your appointment. All staff should turn in medications to the Medical

Team during staff check-ins to ensure appropriate storage. Arrangements will be made for staff to access their medications.

### **HIV Positive/AIDS**

By law, employers in New Hampshire are not permitted to ask for the results of HIV tests on health forms for staff and participants. It is the responsibility of the staff member or program participant to inform the health center **--either verbally or in written form--** if they have AIDS or have tested positive for the HIV virus. The status of a person in regards to the virus and the disease are confidential matters.

### **Pets**

Staff members are not allowed to have pets at Zebra Crossings program.

### **Safety**

The emotional and physical safety of our community is of the highest priority and the responsibility of all staff. If you come upon a situation that appears unsafe, please intervene.

In an effort to insure the physical safety of our community, all knives should be collected by counselors/facilitators on the first day/evening of camp. Mark the knife with the camper's name on masking tape, and turn them into safekeeping to the Medical Team. Knives can only be used under close supervision. All other weapons are prohibited from camp property. Should a camper or staff person have a weapon, it should be brought to the Medical Team immediately and reported to the Camp Director. If you, or any of your campers, brought personal sports equipment please be sure it is stored appropriately and it is not a potential safety risk.

### **Searches**

Searches of personal property rarely take place at our programs. It is important to note that searches would be a last resort. Our community is based on honesty and cooperation, and searches can be in conflict with those values.

A search would be authorized if there was probable cause that an individual(s) possessed something that could threaten the safety and/or wellness of campers or staff. This could include but is not limited to weapons, drugs, alcohol, and stolen property. Invasion of privacy issues may be superseded by safety concerns.

If a staff person has reason to believe a camper's belongings should be searched, the Program Director and Camp Director should be notified. If the Camp Director determines a search is necessary, Camp Director, the leader and the camper will be present for the search. Parents should be notified before the search takes place.

It may be necessary to conduct an investigation that may include inspections of staff or staff personal property. An employee is expected to cooperate with such investigations as a condition of employment, and failure to do so could result in termination. This is known as a "cooperation" rule. If it is deemed necessary to conduct a search of a staff person or staff property, the staff person will be notified. During the search, the Camp Director, the supervisor and the staff person will be present.

## **Service Agreement**

In accepting a position, staff agrees to serve the program to the best of their ability, to willingly participate in assigned activities and to help create a supportive community. They further agree to abide by the ZC's policy of no alcohol or smoking on camp property and no illegal drug use or misuse of prescription drugs. ZC has the right to terminate employment of any staff person who fails to abide by these conditions. ZC does not offer severance to employees who are terminated or who resign. It is understood that the employer/employee relationship as formalized in the service agreement is a binding one. As is referred to in other sections of the staff manual, both employer and employee have rights, responsibilities and privileges.

## **Sexuality, Relationships and Sexual Behavior**

Our community is based on inclusiveness, and we model this value in our daily interactions with one another. We have a responsibility to teach campers that it is possible and desirable to have healthy friendships between individuals. How we interact with one another is a powerful teaching tool. Our primary relationship is to the community!

While always a personal responsibility, one's romantic/sexual behavior regarding inter-staff relationships is also a community responsibility. It is imperative that romantic, or in any way exclusive, relationships do not impact one's ability to complete job responsibilities at the highest standards of safety and quality. It is equally important that relationships in no way become a distraction for campers or other staff. Therefore, public displays of affection are discouraged and relationships between staff are considered inappropriate. Consequences, including but not limited to termination and probation, will result for any staff member(s) that finds themselves involved in a relationship that in any way compromises the quality of campers' experiences or interferes with completion of job responsibilities.

Campers may be curious about staff members' current or past relationships. While it is appropriate for staff to acknowledge present or past relationships, it is inappropriate for staff to share *intimate* details of current or past relationships. If a camper asks questions about such details, it is better to find out why they are asking. Seek support from a senior staff member if you are unsure of how to handle a situation. This policy applies to all staff.

## **Smoking and Use of Tobacco**

As a health consideration and due to fire hazards, no smoking is permitted at any program location. Due to allergies and other health conditions of campers, staff may not smell like smoke at programs either. Other forms of tobacco are prohibited as well. Again, this policy also applies to all participants in our programs. If this is an issue for you, please talk with your supervisor, or the Camp Director. If you know, or suspect, that a participant(s) is/are in violation of this policy, you should notify the Camp Director immediately.

## **Staff/Camper Relations**

The relationship between staff and campers is based solely on trust and this trust must never be violated. Staff relationships with campers should **always** be a professional one. A staff member must not approach a minor camper in a romantic way even when camp is no longer in session. At no time should a staff member be alone with a participant unless they are the cabin leader responsible for overseeing the living space. Even in this situation, a staff member should avoid being alone with one camper in an enclosed space. In addition, at no time should a participant

be present in the personal living space of a staff member during overnight camp. This policy exists for the protection of both staff and participants.

When having a one-on-one discussion with a camper, be sure to sit in an open space, visible to other participants and/or staff. Appropriate touch is an important consideration in staff/participant relations. Camps are often a “huggy” community. However, before you hug a participant, be sure they are comfortable with the gesture. Safe touching zones include a hand on a shoulder or a pat on the upper back.

It is common for participants to develop “crushes” on staff members, especially older participants with crushes on the younger staff. It is important to be aware of this and if you feel a participant may have a crush on you, you should not encourage it nor should other staff. You will need to be more aware of your actions and words to discourage the attention/crush. Please seek advice from your supervisor.

### **Use of Technology**

Participants are prohibited from having electronic devices at camp/program, including cell phones, handheld video game devices or DVD players, and Mp3 or CD players. If your participants have any of these devices, please make sure the participant’s name is clearly on the item and turn them in to safekeeping. Please also be aware of any participants that have digital cameras or video and make every effort to insure they are used appropriately.

Many participants use apps on their cell phones to monitor their health. These participants are asked to only use their phones for health management.

Although staff may keep electronic devices, we ask that you do not use them in the presence of participants or when you have supervisory responsibilities. Use of a cell phone should occur only if it has been established as the designated form of communication with you during a particular program. Otherwise cell phones should only be used during time off or in urgent situations only and should always be discreet. The most significant cases of bullying and social aggression do not happen in the immediate presence of staff, so you need to be “tuned in” to participants during easy time, dressing, and night time.

### **Internet Communication**

We know the internet, when used wisely, provides many safe ways to stay in touch and communicate with our ZC community. We want to encourage these connections in a manner that reinforce the philosophy & values of ZC, and we are seeking your help in doing so.

It is important to remember that once you identify yourself as a staff member of Zebra Crossings, everything and anything that you post on the site can be seen as a reflection of ZC (even if you state otherwise). The same is true for any reference to photos. Potential staff, participant families, alumni, current participants, and ZC staff can all gain access to your postings – and parents will be looking you up on-line as soon as they get home from Opening Day!



This policy is designed to protect you, our participants, and ZC, and to insure future success of all. Following this policy is a requirement of future employment with ZC. Violation of this policy may jeopardize your current and future status with us.

1. Please be respectful of the camp/program, the participants, and staff in all social media. We expect that staff will not engage in harassment or intimidation, or post comments that are disrespectful or derogatory regarding another person or group.
  - As we hope you are aware, the web is a very public venue. We ask that you do not post any text, audio, or images unbecoming of the ZC culture & values or discuss behavior that is prohibited by camp/program policy, or post photos of such behavior.
2. When you participate in social networking sites and networking groups, be mindful of how you interact with participants and what information they have access to. We encourage you not to “friend” any participants until they are adults (18 years of age). If you wish to communicate with them, do so via email or regular mail where you control content of the messages they receive from you.
  - Communication with camp/program mentors and role models can serve as a powerful reminder for participants to continue to strive to be their best self. It can help them transfer their learning from camp/program to their lives at home.
  - AND, it is essential to remember your connection must remain professional. All policies & procedures that guide your relationship with participants on-site should apply to your connection with them off site.
  - Set your privacy controls in a way that limit participant access, keeping your personal life separate from your youth development professional life.
  - If you become aware of participants engaging in cyber bullying, intimidation, or even cyber cliquishness, please intervene in a kind, clear manner. Remind campers of the expectations of the community, and that exclusion or disrespect is not acceptable. If you do not feel comfortable, or if the behavior does not stop, please notify the Designated Program Leader or Executive Director.
3. Please request permission before:
  - Using the ZC or program logos
  - Using text or photographs that are the property of ZC
  - Using photographs of campers or other staff
  - Creating a camp “group page” with the above items
4. Do not use the names of any participants in any social media postings.
5. Before posting photographs of other staff on social networking sites or other public venues, please be smart and use good judgment
6. If you become aware that a member of our community is not following these guidelines, contact them, remind them of the policies and encourage them to make changes, and/or contact ZC immediately.

### **Telephones**

Participant use of any phones is restricted to the approval of the Designated Program Leader. If a camper has permission to use the telephone, a senior staff member must be present.

### **Tips and Gratuities**

It is ZC policy for staff members not to receive gifts or tips from parents. If a parent expresses an interest in giving a gift, encourage him/her to make a donation to Zebra Crossings, which is an appropriate gift of thanks for the entire community.

### **Use of ZC Property**

When not in use by campers, various program equipment and facilities are available for staff use with permission. Specialized activity equipment and program areas may only be used when an appropriately trained ZC staffer supervises the activity. Staff should follow all ZC policies & procedures for use. Staff are responsible for the care and maintenance of ZC property assigned or available to them as part of their job duties (including radios, pagers, cell phones, program equipment, etc...). It should be used exclusively for conducting ZC business. Please fill out an incident report should ZC property be damaged, stolen or misplaced. All equipment must be returned at the end of the program season. ZC may deduct the replacement cost for any lost or damaged equipment from a staff member's final paycheck to the extent permitted by law.

### **Waterfront**

The waterfront at any program is strictly in use **ONLY** during specific program times when a designated staff member is on duty, and in clearly outlined activity blocks. Use of the waterfront outside of these specific times must be cleared with the Executive Director.

### **Weapons**

Employees may not, at any time while on any property owned, leased or controlled by Zebra Crossings, including anywhere that the organization conducts business, such as program locations, vendor locations, fairs, restaurants, event venues, and so forth, possess or use any weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, chemicals and any objects that could be used to harass, intimidate, or injure another individual. Regardless of whether an employee possesses a concealed weapons permit or is allowed by law to possess a weapon, weapons are prohibited on any company property or in any location in which the employee represents the company for business purposes, including those listed above.

### **Work Related Injuries**

All Staff are covered by Workers Compensation during camp/program. This means, if you are injured or become ill as a result of performing your job, Workers Compensation covers your medical expense. If you seek medical treatment for injury or illness not associated with your work, you or your insurance must cover the cost. An Incident Form must be filled out within 24 hours of the injury or illness and turned into the Executive Director.

### **Valuables and Safekeeping**

ZC is not responsible for lost valuables or money. Please seek advice from your supervisor regarding safekeeping options at your location.

### **Visitors**

When visitors arrive, they should always check in at the registration table/office to sign in, pick up a visitor nametag and let us know why/who they are visiting. Visitors should also check out at

the registration table/office before leaving. Staff are asked to greet visitors and provide any assistance that is appropriate.

If a staff member sees a stranger without a visitor tag, he or she should escort the person to the registration table/office to check in. Staff should explain this visitor policy to participants. If participants see a visitor without a visitor tag, they should inform a staff member. If a visitor refuses to check-in at the office, send a small group of runners to the nearest phone or radio to call for assistance. Do not leave participants unattended. Always consider custody issues and the potential of individuals having been legally denied access to a child.

**Always consult with the Executive Director or Designated Program Leader if an adult is picking up a child early.**

## **5. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **5.1. RISK MANAGEMENT & PREVENTION**

Our primary goal is to insure the safety of all participants in ZC programs. If and when an accident, incident or emergency occurs, proper action and reporting is essential. All staff are expected to be aware of the emergency procedures and reporting policies to insure the best care of all involved.

Zebra Crossings is dedicated to the health and safety of our participants and staff. We operate according to a risk management system with the following objectives:

- to prevent fatalities, disabling injuries, and serious illnesses
- reduce other incidents, injuries, illnesses
- protect our facilities and the natural environment/habitat surrounding them
- maintain the emotional and physical safety for those involved

### **Accident & Incident Reports**

The intent of our incident reporting is to document incidents to aid us in reviewing our risk management and safety procedures as an organization. The reporting process will enable our staff to observe areas of potential improvements and ensure that the organization is maintaining procedures that support the safety of our participants, staff, facility, and environment. The types of incidents that will be reported are: injury, illness, behavioral, near miss, and site.

### **Accident/Incident Forms**

This form will track any accidents, incidents or near misses that involve participants, staff, volunteers or the facility/property. These forms allow Zebra Crossings to compile information so that we can continue to evaluate and improve how we provide a safe environment for our participants. It assists in the clear communication with the parent/guardian of a participant.

### **This form should be filled out:**

1. Any time it is necessary for the medical staff to treat an injury beyond a band aid.
2. Any time emergency medical services are required
3. Any time there was an incident resulting in a “near miss”. The potential was present for someone to get hurt or something to get damaged.
4. Any time a staff/volunteer needed to establish a written behavior contract.

The staff/volunteer who was involved/witnessed the accident/incident should be the person who fills out the form. The form should be completed as soon as possible and no later than 12 hours of the incident occurring. The form needs to be submitted to director/supervisor.

**Reports must be submitted to the Executive Director within 24 hours of an incident.** Please write legibly and fill out forms completely. All information is important.

Before working at Zebra Crossings programs, each staff member will be trained in Emergency response, demonstrate knowledge of emergency procedures, and will have the opportunity to discuss the procedures and have questions regarding the Emergency Plan answered by the Designated Program Leader or Executive Director. Staff members will be expected to perform the emergency procedures according to the Emergency Plan. This plan provides a line of communication for all participants and camp/program staff in the event of an accident or emergency.

The first responsibility in any accident is to care for the victims and maintain the safety of the other participants and staff. Persons on the scene of the accident should initiate first aid, and then seek the help of a fellow staff member, facility staff person, or medical staff person.

## **5.2. NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

After acting in accordance with appropriate protocol at the incident, the staff person will notify the Executive Director. At this point, communication about the incident will be the responsibility of the Executive Director.

In consultation with staff, the Executive Director will notify appropriate parties of the incident. Generally speaking, parents will be notified by telephone. In the most extreme cases, calls may be attempted as frequently as each hour. The participant's physician will be notified if medically appropriate.

## **5.3. MEDIA RELATIONS**

ZC Executive Director, working closely with the Zebra Crossings board, will be responsible for media relations. S/he will be solely responsible for media activity on the camp/program premises. The interests of the participants and families will be paramount in relations with the media.

## **5.4. COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a life threatening emergency, the Designated Program Leader will inform the Executive Director. If necessary, an Emergency Response Team (ERT) will be formed. At this time, ERT members will be informed of the incident, as well as plans for managing the incident and informing the greater camp/program community as appropriate.

It is Zebra Crossings intention to gather the staff as soon as appropriate to inform staff of the incident (separate from participants). **We ask that until a meeting is called to share information, staff remain focused on the participants in our care to insure their safety and quality experience, and avoid spreading rumors.**

**It is important that our community remain calm and focused.** Participants will be informed of the incident as appropriate after staff are informed of the incident and the plan for follow-up. The successful management of any emergency will require the cooperation and trust of the entire community.

The purpose of the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is to outline the actions that should be taken by staff members in the event of emergency involving personnel, participants or property. The response to emergencies will seek to:

1. Contain the extent of injury or damage
2. Notify appropriate people
3. Limit negative publicity
4. Prevent reoccurrence

For the purpose of this plan, an emergency is any serious incident (impairment of health, severe injury, death, missing person or extensive property damage) involving participants, staff or guests. The Executive Director or in her absence the Designated Program Leader will put the Emergency Response Plan into effect.

### **Emergency Response Team**

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) will manage emergencies that involve or affect the Zebra Crossings camp/program community. The ERT may consist of the following Senior Staff Members in the program, including:

- Executive Director
- Designated Program Leader
- Senior Staff
- Medical Team Leader
- Any available staff or volunteer not assigned to supervision of participants

**Field Staff Response to Emergencies:** All staff should be aware of these protocols.

**For all emergencies, the following should serve as a guide for response:**

1. The first response of leaders/staff on the scene is to attend to the safety and well-being of the injured person(s) and the group.
2. The second response is to limit the possibilities for further injury to people or extended damage to property.
3. The third response is to notify appropriate emergency personnel, outside emergency personnel and/or on-site Medical Team staff, and the senior staff. When notifying on-site staff field staff should use the following description:
  - **Yellow Light** – significant incident that does not require immediate assistance, and is currently being monitored by staff, and/or has the potential to move to a Red Light. Ex. abuse, disruptive behavior, lost participant (less than 1 hour), discovery of drugs or alcohol, injury that may require non-life threatening medical care.
  - **Red Light** – Emergency requiring immediate assistance from the site and/or outside agencies. Ex. abuse allegations on staff, life threatening medical.
4. The fourth response is to begin documentation.

## **EMERGENCY “ALL CALL”**

Zebra Crossings will always have two cell phones (with chargers) at the program to call emergency fire & rescue services and receive emergency communications. In the event of an evacuation, the Senior Staff will be required to bring their cell phones outside to call parents.

- On the first day of each camp session/program, staff members will be responsible for reviewing emergency procedures according to the Emergency Plan with participants.
- Buddy tag system: children should always travel in groups of two with an adult.

### **Procedures:**

1. Two long whistles (5 seconds) will be sounded signaling everyone to report to the Meeting Center. Participants will remain with a staff and/or volunteer person that they are assigned to at all times. Everyone will move efficiently, safely and orderly. All participants will be with a buddy. Executive Director is responsible for bringing the attendance sheet and all contact information.
  - a. If the Meeting Center is no longer safe, report to the backup Meeting Center.
  - b. Both locations will be established prior to any camp/program and all staff and volunteers and participants will be informed as part of the orientation
  - c. In extreme circumstances, the facility may need to be evacuated.
    - i. See “Evacuating Facility Procedures”
  - d. The triage medical staff will bring the first aid kit and essential participant medicines
2. Once at the Meeting Center, count participants and make sure all are present.
  - a. If any children are missing, a Response Team (made of no less than 2 adults), will search the facility for the child. See “Missing Child Procedures”
  - b. Communication between the Response team and staff at Meeting Center will be maintained with either cell phones or radio.
3. Participants, staff, and volunteers will remain at the Meeting Center until informed by Zebra Crossings Executive Director or Designated Program Leader that it is safe to leave.
  - a. Zebra Crossings Executive Director and/or Designated Program Leader will consult with facility director, local authorities, and weather forecasts to make this decision.
4. Staff and volunteers will engage participants in calm activities while at the Meeting Center.

### **5.5. STORMS & LIGHTNING**

Prevention is the first step in risk management. Be aware of the forecast and your surroundings:

- Keep an eye on weather during warm periods and during the passage of cold fronts. When cumulus clouds begin building up and darkening, a thunderstorm is probably approaching. Also look for sudden increases in wind or decreases in temperature.
- Plan your day based around the morning’s forecast.

The following precaution steps need to be taken at the first signs of lightning and/or thunder:

- Move immediately to an indoor location as designated in daily program procedures.
- If needed cars offer good lightning protection.
- Activate the All Call Whistle to get kids inside before a storm
- Continue an activity until a thunderstorm has passed.

We will not resume outdoor activities unless we think it is safe to move. You should remain inside until 30 minutes have passed since thunder or lightening was last observed.

If there is no good option available and the group is outdoors use the following guidelines:

- Get below tree line; if not possible, get away from summits and ridges.
- Get away from anything tall and/or metal- the tallest tree in the woods, towers, etc.
- Get away from the water, streams and large puddles (at least 100 yards).
- Spread the group out; do not hold hands or sit back-to-back.
- Sit on something insulated, such as an insulate pad, with your legs crossed.
- Try to have only one point of contact on the ground.

## **5.6 FACILITY INCIDENTS**

We will work closely with the staff of any hosting facility during an incident.

### **Facility Evacuation:**

1. Two long whistles (5 seconds each) will be sounded signaling everyone to report to the Meeting Center. Participants will remain with a staff and/or volunteer person at all times. Everyone will move fast and orderly. All participants will be with a buddy.
  - a. If the Meeting Center is no longer safe, report to the backup Meeting Center.
  - b. Both the Meeting Center and the backup Meeting Center will be established prior to any program and all staff and volunteers will be informed of it.
  - c. The medical staff will bring the first aid kit and essential participant medicines
2. Once at the Meeting Center, count participants and make sure all are present.
  - a. If any children are missing, a Response Team (made of no less than 2 adults), will search the facility for the child. See “Missing Child Procedures”
  - b. Communication between the Response team and staff at Meeting Center will be maintained with either cell phones or radio.
3. Once all are gathered at the Meeting Center an appropriate plan will be made between the Zebra Crossings Executive Director and Designated Program Leader.
  - a. Zebra Crossings Director and/or Designated Program Leader will consult with facility director, local authorities, and weather forecasts to make this decision.
  - b. All efforts to continue the program will be made.
  - c. Staff and volunteers will engage participants in calm, engaging activities while at the Meeting Center.
  - d. If necessary, parents will be contacted by Zebra Crossings Executive Director and/or DPL to request that participants are picked up immediately.
4. If it is necessary to leave the facility immediately
  - a. Once protocol for meeting at the Meeting Center has been made, Zebra Crossings Executive Director and Designated Program Leader will establish a plan for the safe removal of participants.
  - b. Participants will travel with buddies.
  - c. Head count will be taken before leaving the facility and once arrived at new location.

- Staff and volunteers will engage participants in calm, engaging activities while at the location until parents arrive for pick up.
- Parents will be notified of the evacuation as soon as possible. The safety of participants will be the priority.
- If necessary, participants will be moved to safety prior to parent notification.

**Power Outage:**

- Have group stay where they are
- Evaluate safety for moving around and use flashlights for walking around
- Check facility for possible downed power lines or other problems and take action to make area safe
- Relocate group if necessary
- Await further instructions

**5.7 FIRE EMERGENCIES**

**Reporting**

1. If a fire starts in your vicinity, douse it immediately (cut off air supply) with sand, brooms, fire extinguishers, blankets, water, etc.
2. If early efforts fail (after one minute), contact the senior staff via runner or a cell phone, who indicate the “ALL CALL” whistle. The senior staff will also designate someone to call 911.

**Procedures**

1. At the sound of the All Call Whistle, all participants and staff will assemble at the Meeting Center by group.
2. The group leaders will conduct a head count of participants and notify their Designated Program Leader.
3. Firefighting will be directed by the hosting facility staff. No participants will be involved in firefighting.
4. Group leaders & staff keep participants assembled and out of danger until the fire is extinguished.
5. The Medical Team will report to the Meeting Center with First Aid and emergency kits.





## **Medical Emergencies**

Possible Signs that could mean a more serious medical condition is occurring include, but not limited to:

- Respiratory distress
- Seizures
- Diabetic issue / low blood sugar
- Allergic reaction to known allergen
- Severe bleeding
- Chest pain
- Drowning or near drowning
- Loss of consciousness

Have one person stay with the injured person. The person who remains should be the person with the greatest level of medical training AND the calmest. Send a runner to contact the medical staff and/or EMT. **Never** leave the child unattended.

If you believe there is a life threatening medical concern, have someone contact 911 immediately. Then notify the camp/program medical staff and EMT.

If external medical assistance is required, follow the emergency plan.

1. Dial 911 and request a paramedic.
2. A designated staff member will meet ambulance in parking lot.
3. A staff person will direct ambulance personnel to injured or sick person.
4. Appropriate camp/program personnel will accompany injured/sick person to hospital and will maintain contact with ZC concerning condition of injured/sick person.
5. Bring participant forms.

The Executive Director and Medical Team Leader (MTL) will make the decision about which hospital the child will be taken to and if necessary, who to accompany the child on the transport. Bring child's registration forms and parental consent form for treatment off campsite. The Executive Director or MTL will contact the parents.

### **How to handle the other participants:**

1. Any activity involving potential risk of injury will be stopped immediately.
2. The other participants will either join another group (the closest one to the accident location) or another staff/volunteer will oversee the group and move them away from having a visual of the injured person.
3. If any other group is close enough to the injured person to have either heard or seen the accident, stop any activity involving potential risk of injury and move the group away from the injured person in a calm and orderly fashion.
4. Staff and volunteers will engage participants in calm, engaging activities while the injured person is being treated.
5. Regularly scheduled activities will only resume once the Executive Director or Designated Program Leader have so instructed.

## 5.10 BEHAVIORIAL INCIDENTS

### Response to Behavioral (ex. Suicidal Ideation, Threat to self/others, Outbursts)

- Any threat to harm self or others must be taken seriously
  - Do not leave individual(s) unsupervised
  - At least 2 staff/volunteers remain with the participant
  - Move group away from individual(s) involved in behavior issue
  - Give person(s) time and space they may need to calm down
  - Listen and comfort person(s) in need – do not discount their statements
- Possible responses include:
- “I need to stay right here, and I’m available when you are ready to talk.”
  - “No one will make you do anything you don’t want to do”
  - “Tell me what’s going on... Explain to me what is happening” (Let them tell you what is happening as opposed to telling them what is happening)
  - “You have the choice to talk to me or not, but I may need to write some of the things down so that we can get you the support you need” (Document, listen, but do not prompt or analyze)
- Send runners (extra staff on scene or two campers) to the nearest office or phone with:
    - Information on behavior incident, number of people involved and emergency status (green, yellow, red)
    - Location of incident
    - First aid supplies needed
  - Continue management of group, even after individual(s) involved in incident are removed.

### Response to Camper Threatening with Weapon (ex. knife, gun, baseball bat)

- You are not asked to be a hero. Your safety is important.
- Remove everyone from area if possible.
- If you feel unsafe, leave the scene and articulate that to the person with the weapon.
- Maintain an awareness of the scene if you leave (ex. Stand a safe distance from cabin where threatening participant is located).
- Maintain a calm demeanor – do not be loud or aggressive, speak calmly and softly, inform the person and the group of everything that you are doing.
- Keep in mind their action may be a call for help and want you to listen.
- Send runners (extra staff on scene or two participants) to the nearest phone or radio with:
  - Information on type of weapon, number of people involved, and emergency status (green, yellow, red)
  - Location of incident
  - First Aid supplies needed
- Continue management of group even after threatening individual(s) has been removed from the scene.

## **5.11 MISSING PARTICIPANT PROTOCOL**

In the event that a participant is not present, the first steps in finding the participant are:

1. One group leader will remain with their participant
2. Group leader will notify supervisors/director immediately by cell phone or radio based on circumstances, staff/volunteers will either be instructed to continue with regularly scheduled programming or to engage participants in calm, engaging activities while the supervisors and/or the director conduct a search.

**The first places that will be searched are:**

1. The last location the participant was
2. Assigned cabin (if appropriate)
3. Bathrooms
4. Meeting Center

**If participant is still missing:**

1. Notify the facilities staff
2. Keep a staff or volunteer person at the Meeting Center for the duration of the search
3. Have all available staff/volunteers head out from last sighting location in a circle configuration
4. Executive Director will contact appropriate authorities
5. Executive Director will contact parents/guardians

### **MISSING PERSON(S) – IN CAMP**

A participant is considered missing one hour after unscheduled loss of contact with that participant.

**Reporting Missing Participant:**

1. Whenever a participant does not report to the assigned place or activity (meals, easy time, activity, bedtime, etc.), the group leader will be notified. If the participant does not report to an interest group, the interest group leader will contact the Program Coordinator by radio or phone, or by sending a runner.
2. During interest groups, the DPL will assign a staff member to search the cabin or program area. If appropriate, they will contact the leader of the participants' previous activity. If the last activity was at the waterfront, waterfront staff should begin waterfront emergency procedures.
3. Contact the Medical Team to see if the participant has sought medical attention.
4. Contact the Waterfront to see if the participant can be located there.
5. Check the dining hall to see if the participant is doing dishes.
6. If through these procedures, the participant is not found or it is known that the participant is definitely missing, the DPL will notify the Executive Director.
7. The Executive Director is the only person authorized to call for a search.

**Signal: Two long blows of the whistle signals a general assembly. All** camp/program members will gather at the Meeting Center by group. All staff with phones should check their phone away from participants to look or listen for instructions.

### **Procedures**

1. The Executive Director will direct the search and will serve as the "Information Center".
2. Determine from the participant's schedule the last time and places the participant was seen. Determine the last person the participant had contact with, time and location of that contact.
3. Determine from group mates and other participants what the participant was wearing and if there were pertinent factors involved in their disappearance. (i.e. homesickness, a fight with another participant, upsetting news from home, etc.). Determine if the participant had made any comments about intentions, desires, etc.
4. Obtain the Participant Information Form from the office to secure information about height, weight, picture, parent's address, etc. This information, along with identifying clothing will be helpful if outside authorities have to be contacted.
5. Gather other helpful information that may provide clues as to where the participant may have gone and why. Examples are: has the participant taken sleeping bag, back pack, jacket or other clothing that may have indicated a trip was intended or was there overnight potential?
6. During the search, the Designated Program Leader(s), along with the group leaders, will be responsible for facilitating activities to engage the camper/program community (rainy day activities, etc.). They are to be done in a central location.
7. If initial investigations do not uncover the missing participant, set up a systematic search.
8. If participant cannot be located through these searches, contact the police.
9. If participant cannot be located within two hours, The Executive Director will notify the parents of the missing participant(s).

### **5.12 RESPONSE TO INTRUDER**

Visitors should have a visitor tag, recognition that they have checked with senior staff and have permission to be on-site. Visitors without tags should be directed/accompanied to the senior staff member to check-in.

If an unauthorized visitor seems suspicious or threatening, makes you uncomfortable, or if he/she has a weapon, do not approach. The immediate priority is to focus on the safety of any participants in the area. Use your judgment to calmly move camper away from the intruder, and send a runner (ideally staff person) to the senior staff or to call for help.

Senior Staff will announce "All Call" by two long blasts of the whistle. All staff with phones should check their phone away from participants to look or listen for instructions.

Staff will be informed of the location of the intruder and instructed to lock down or disperse with their kids. Lock down locations include buildings where doors can be locked and with limited windows. If groups are instructed to disperse, instructions will be given regarding direction.

Participants should be instructed to:

- Maintain silence and stay calm
- Move away from danger
- Staff in lockdown locations should
  - Secure the location – lock doors and if possible “harden the location” by moving tables/desks to secure space. Turn out lights and make sure participants and staff are out of sight from any windows.
  - Take a head count and if possible write down the names of participants and staff in your location.
  - If possible, establish communication with the ERT. The ERT will stay in touch with you via radio or phone to assist in providing situational awareness.
  - Staff and participants should stay in their locations until the police or emergency responders inform them it is safe. They will instruct you where the community is gathering and the best route to take.

### 5.13 DISCLOSURE & MANDATED REPORTING

Behavioral health professionals are expected to comply with mandated reporting statutes. The intent of this protocol is to manage the process of mandated reporting in a consistent fashion. This document is intended to provide clear steps for behavioral health professionals to follow when they are confronted with information, which indicates that mandated reporting needs to occur.

**Background:** New Hampshire law (RSA 169-C: 29) is clear that **any person** having reason to **suspect** that a child has been abused or neglected is required to report that suspicion to the Central Intake Unit of the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). The staff at the DCYF Central Intake Unit is entirely composed of people who have worked in the field and who can be used as consultants. Once a report is made, the Central Intake Unit will review the report and determine if an assessment by the local DCYF office is needed. If a situation does not rise to the level of assignment for an assessment, the report will be retained at the Central Intake Unit for one year. If a further report is made on this same family within the year, a re-determination will be made as to if DCYF involvement is warranted. The bottom line is, if you are unsure whether or not to make a call, **MAKE THE CALL** and discuss it with a DCYF Intake Worker.

RSA 169-C-3, II, defines an abused child as "...a child who has been:

- Sexually abused;
- Intentionally physically injured; Psychologically injured so that said child exhibits symptoms of emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect;
- Physically injured by other than accidental means."

RSA 169 –C: 3, XIX defines a neglected child as a child:

- "Who has been abandoned by his parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- Who is without proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for his physical, mental, or emotional health, when it is established that his health has suffered or is very likely to suffer serious impairment; and the deprivation is not due primarily to the lack of financial means of the parents, guardian or custodian; or
- Whose parents, guardian or custodian are unable to discharge their responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization or other physical or mental incapacity..."

Everyone is a mandated reporter of suspected abuse and neglect and are afforded the following protection in the reporting pro

- Anyone in good faith making a report is immune from any liability, civil or criminal. (RSA 169-C: 31.
- The identity of the reporter and the content of the report are considered to be confidential. (Disclosure may occur if DCYF is court ordered to do so)
- You can request to be anonymous.
- You may be asked to follow up your verbal report with a written report within 48 hours

## **Child Protection Plan**

### **A. Definitions**

**"Child"** means a person under 18 years of age.

**"Child abuse"** means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare, which occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or maltreatment.

**"Child neglect"** means harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare which occurs through negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter and medical care.

**"Department"** means the state Department of Social Services.

## Staff Procedures

1. Upon arrival of participants and staff, the health officer shall screen all staff and participants as to their physical condition. Note any bruises, cuts or markings on the child's body.
2. The leaders shall watch for any signs of child abuse or neglect.
3. If child abuse is "**suspected**", report to Executive Director or DPL.
4. If participant confides in you of having been abused or neglected, only relate this information to the Executive Director and Designated Program Leader. Do **NOT** tell any participant or other staff member!
5. Participant's records and applications shall be kept confidential. No one shall have access to the participant's files except the Executive Director, Program Director, and (Assistant) Medical Director.

## Reporting Procedures

1. Suspected abuse or neglect is to be reported immediately to the Camp Director.
2. Reporting is handled through the New Hampshire Division of Children and Youth Service. Their office number is
  - i. 1-800-894-5533.
3. The Executive Director shall make an oral report within 8 hours.
4. Within 72 hours, a written report shall be made to the Department of Social Services. The written report shall contain the name of the child and a description of the abuse or neglect. If possible, the report shall contain the names and addresses of the child's parents/guardian, or the persons with whom the child resides, the child's age, and other information which might establish the cause of abuse or neglect and the manner in which it occurred.
5. If the participant seems to be injured, medical treatment will be given by the nearest hospital or doctor-on-call.

## B. Confidentiality

1. The "**need to know**" as a staff member, is part of one's maturity and understanding in a job context. Vocationally, one becomes more knowledgeable and informed with job responsibilities and role. As a result, information is known because of job category. This information, because of its sensitive nature, must be regarded as confidential. Legally, staff is given information which must remain confidential.
2. An example of confidentiality and professionalism in the doing of a job is discovering physical and/or sexual abuse of a participant. The laws of the State of New Hampshire make it a crime if this information is share with anyone else.