



# Camp Walk On Water

## CAMP POLICIES: PREVENTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT



*Dear Camp Staff Member or Volunteer,*

*Welcome to Camp WOW!*

*At Camp WOW, we take our responsibility to care for campers very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate an excellent camp experience for all those who spend time at Camp WOW.*

*The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for Camp WOW staff members and volunteers designed to prevent sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect of campers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for campers, protecting campers, you, and the mission of Camp WOW. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.*

*After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.*

*Sincerely,*

***Camp WOW Management***

# Camp WOW Camp Policies: Preventing Abuse and Neglect

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## **Overview of the Camp WOW Safety System**

Because we care for and desire to protect campers, Camp WOW requires all staff members and volunteers to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before placement.

### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

Camp WOW policies and procedures require that staff members and volunteers avoid abusive or neglectful behavior of any kind. Staff members and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of Camp WOW Management. Staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers, as well as “grooming behaviors” used by abusers to select and prepare a camper for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s care-giver or ‘gatekeeper’), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip Camp WOW staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Camp WOW requires all staff members and volunteers to complete MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training (live, or online at [www.MinistrySafe.com](http://www.MinistrySafe.com) or [www.AbusePreventionSystems.com](http://www.AbusePreventionSystems.com)). This training will be renewed every two years.

### **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the Camp WOW Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- complete a face-to-face or telephone interview (employees and volunteers)
- provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)

### **STEP THREE: Review Policies & Procedures**

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page, indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

### **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

Camp WOW requires that all staff members and volunteers undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of criminal background check may be required.

## **Camper Safety Policy**

### **ABUSE TOLERANCE**

Camp WOW has a **zero tolerance for abuse**. It is the responsibility of every Camp WOW staff member and volunteer to act in the best interest of campers in every program.

In the event any staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is the personal responsibility of each such staff member or volunteer to immediately report their observations to an immediate supervisor or a member of Camp WOW Management.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

Camp WOW is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Camp WOW Management and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

Camp WOW intends to create and foster a culture of communication, reporting safety concerns or policy violations. Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report possible ‘grooming’ behaviors, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of Camp WOW Management.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

Camp WOW staff members and volunteers who supervise other employees or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Camp WOW policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment for both volunteers and staff members.

## **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

### **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

In order to maintain a safe environment for campers, Camp WOW staff members and volunteers must be aware of each individual's responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor or Camp WOW Management.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED OR HARMFUL ACT**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act, or any act considered to be harmful to a child, will be immediately suspended from participation at Camp WOW. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act will be removed from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involve campers at Camp WOW. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Camp WOW.

Failure to report a prohibited act to one of the individuals identified above is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of a staff member or dismissal of a volunteer.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Staff members and volunteers at Camp WOW are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the immediate supervisor of the area or Camp WOW Management.

Oklahoma law requires that any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to an appropriate law enforcement agency. A staff member or volunteer may report to an immediate supervisor or a member of the CAMP WOW Management allowing one of these individuals to make the appropriate report to law enforcement agencies.

Staff members and volunteers are required to verbally report an incident to a supervisory staff member as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer, the supervisor or management team member will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the camper spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. A CAMP WOW Camp Management team member will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

If appropriate, a member of CAMP WOW Management will inform Oklahoma Child Protective Services (1-405-521-2283) or Department of Human Services (1-800-522-3511).

## **Staff Member and Volunteer Monitoring Plan**

Monitoring of staff members and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member and volunteer interactions with campers.

1. Camp WOW Management conducts periodic verbal performance evaluations for each staff member and volunteer in his/her program area. This evaluation will include matters covered in this policy manual and adherence to risk management procedures.
2. Team Leaders conducts periodic verbal performance evaluations for each staff member and volunteer in his/her program area. This evaluation will include matters covered in this policy manual and adherence to risk management procedures.

## **Camp Culture – Staff Members & Volunteers**

### **PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

Your physical grooming makes a statement to campers, parents and other staff members and volunteers. While serving at Camp WOW, we ask that you limit your freedom concerning hairstyle, clothing, tattoos, and other outward physical accessories and fashions. If you have questions about your personal choices in these matters, and whether an article of clothing or style is appropriate for wear at Camp WOW, please consult Camp WOW Management.

### **MODESTY**

Your choice of clothing makes a statement. While serving at Camp WOW, we ask that our female staff members and volunteers help us create an atmosphere of modesty by wearing one-piece bathing suits, covering swimwear with t-shirts and shorts while not participating in water activities. We ask our male staff members to show similar respect to women by wearing t-shirts when not participating in water activities, and to avoid Speedo-style swimsuits.

### **TATOOS AND PIERCINGS**

All inappropriate tattoos (profanity, substances, nudity, violence, etc..) must be covered at all times. Any exceptions to this rule must come from Camp WOW's Director. All staff may not have more than 2 facial piercings. All staff may not have more than 3 piercings in each ear. Any exceptions to this rule must come from Camp WOW's Director.

### **DATING**

Public displays of affection between dating couples are not permitted under any circumstances. Pursuing a new dating relationship with another staff member, while serving on staff is not permitted and can wait until summer is over. We expect professional behavior at all times.

### **MODELING BEHAVIOR**

What we do in moderation, campers will do in excess. Campers will look to you to set the boundaries they will test. This is a dilemma with which every staff member or volunteer will wrestle. They way you dress, what you say, how you respond to the smallest circumstance – our campers are watching. If you communicate that it is OK to move an inch, they *will* go a mile. Please read and understand the guidelines below regarding appropriate “touch and talk”, and follow them closely.

The following rules are to be followed at all times:

- **No Verbal Abuse**
- **Never touch a child in an aggressive manner**
- **Absolutely No Profanity**
- **No Displays of Public Nudity at Any Time**
- **No Mooning, De-Pantsing, Wedgies or Swirlies**
- **No Descriptive Stories Regarding Drinking or Sexual Behaviors**
- **No Urinating Off Porches at Any Time By Anyone**
- **No Sleeping or Napping With Campers for Any Reason**



- **Never Compare a Camper's Body With Another Camper or Staff/Volunteer**
- **No Racial Put-Downs or Racial Jokes**
- **No Ear or Body Piercing or Tattooing of Any Camper**
- **No Tickling Campers**
- **No Wrestling**

### **APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL TOUCH**

All staff members and volunteers should exercise good judgment when expressing one's self through physical touch. Appropriate physical touch may include the following:

1. An arm around the shoulder (side hug)
2. Short, congratulatory or greeting hugs
3. A brief, assuring pat on the head or shoulder, but **NOT** to those kids who feel that such touch is offensive to have their heads patted or hair fluffed.
4. A few **NEVERS**:
  - a. We don't touch kids in anger or disgust.
  - b. We don't touch kids in any sexually connotative manner.
  - c. No staff member will ever (day or night) be on or in a child's bed.
  - d. Never touch a child's private parts (to remove ticks or for any other reason).
  - e. Never tickle a child; this can be misconstrued as sexual contact.
  - f. Never ignore a camper's request not to be touched.
  - g. Never express or require physical affection or touching in any form from a child who shows or expresses discomfort with physical touch.

If a question ever arises, consult Camp WOW Management.

Any infraction of the above policy involving even the slightest form of sexual connotation will result in immediate dismissal from the camp with no chance of rehire.

## **Camp Culture – Campers**

### **BULLYING**

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying will not be tolerated.

It should be made clear from the first minute of every session that verbal, physical or emotional harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. At the first sign of verbal or other attacks, act decisively. There is no “harmless putdown” when dealing with kids.

- a. First instance comes with a warning to the camper and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is inappropriate. Make sure not to embarrass or chastise them.
- b. Second instance requires that you pull the offending camper(s) from the group, along with their church leader and discuss the inappropriateness of bullying behavior. Set some clear parameters and behavioral goals for them to achieve. However, let them know that the next offense will be reported to Church Leadership. Notify the Camp WOW Management and Church Leadership of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse.
- c. Make sure that any camper who is the brunt of bullying attacks is handling the situation well. Have a private dialogue with him or her to assess the situation. **DO NOT SINGLE CAMPERS OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP!** Be discreet and protect their dignity.
- d. Third instance should be reported to Camp WOW Management.

### **RESPECTING CAMPER PRIVACY**

Make sure campers understand the importance of respecting each other’s privacy. A camper’s bed is his/her home and the camper’s cabin trunk/suitcase is off-limits to anyone but the camper. In addition, shower time is a very private time. During showers, only those who are taking showers should be in the bathroom or shower stall.

### **DISCIPLINE**

It is the policy of Camp WOW that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of campers. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by campers. If a camper is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from a staff member/volunteer, staffers should report to their church leader. If the behavior persists, staffers should report to Camp WOW Management, who will follow up with Church Leadership. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, a staff member or volunteer will verbally redirect campers involved, trying to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to Camp WOW Management and Church Leadership.

## **VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and campers should be positive and uplifting. Camp WOW employees and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging and constructive.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to campers in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, employees and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing or using profanity.

## **ACCESS TO CAMP DIRECTOR**

Camp WOW Management are available to discuss any like, dislike, suggestion, complaint or discomfort. Any camper can leave a note or meet in person with Camp WOW management in the Camp WOW office or arrange a time for a discussion.

## **Supervision of Campers**

### **OFF-LIMIT AREAS**

All Camp WOW staff members and volunteers will be responsible for ensuring that campers are not in areas deemed off-limits.

### **MONITORING HIGH-RISK AREAS**

**The purpose of this section is to become aware of *high risk* areas at camp, and methods to effectively lower that risk.** Any areas on camp property where campers are not directly supervised is a high risk area. In these areas, campers can more easily bully and abuse (verbally, physically, and even sexually) each other. It is the responsibility of all staff members and volunteers to be aware of the potential for bullying and abuse, and to monitor camp locations where campers can be alone.

For activities involving large numbers of campers, staff members and volunteers will be assigned to monitor high risk areas for the duration of the activity. Monitoring of high risk areas will be built in to the programming and planning for these events.

High-Risk Areas include:

- all bathrooms on camp property
- night activities
- water activities
- changing areas (during day and night)

### **UNOBSERVED ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTION WITH CAMPERS**

No camper will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during camp ministry programming or activities. Camp WOW staff members and volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual camper in any room or building. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single camper, that staff member or volunteer will take the camper to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a camper desires conversation or counsel with a staff member or volunteer after regular programming has concluded, the staff member or volunteer to relocate the discussion to a place where other staff members are present, or which is easily observed.)

After every programming event, staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving to ensure that there is no camper left unsupervised.

Any two campers together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

### **APPROPRIATE ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CAMPERS**

Camp WOW recognizes that meeting the emotional needs of campers may occasionally require staff member and volunteers to meet with them on an individual basis. Staff Members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with campers.

Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual camper at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.

In the event a closed-door meeting must occur, the staff member must be approved by Camp WOW Management.

Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual camper at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.

## **Rules for Camper Safety**

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Camp WOW is committed to protecting campers in its care. To this end, Camp WOW has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our camp programs. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working or volunteering at Camp WOW:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and campers are important for camper's development and are generally suitable in the camp setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor or Camp WOW Management.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the camper, never based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other campers or staff members or volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or interpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting campers under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by other adults and campers.
6. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by any staff member, volunteer or camper must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor or Camp WOW Management.

## **SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Staff members should always sleep in staff dorms. There is never an occasion when staff members should sleep in camper's dorms, the lodge, cabins or any location other than their own bed in the staff dorms. There is no exception to this rule.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with campers and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any camper in the program. If it is necessary to address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality, clear such discussions with Church Leadership and Camp WOW Management.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS**

Staff members and volunteers at Camp WOW are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials or images (magazines, cards, phone pics, videos, etc.) at Camp WOW or in the presence of campers.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members and volunteers at Camp WOW should never be nude in the presence of campers in their care or other staff members for any reason. Please always change clothes in the closed stall of a bathroom.

## **TOBACCO**

Camp WOW requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products while on Camp WOW property, and while in the presence of campers or their family members. Camp WOW is a tobacco-free facility.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while in any Camp WOW facility, while working with or supervising campers, or at any other time while in the employment of Camp WOW.

## **STAFF LOUNGE**

The Staff Lounge is open until 1:00am each night and available **ONLY** for summer staff members and volunteers. At no time should a camper be invited into or be allowed inside the Staff Lounge. The Staff Lounge is not your bedroom or personal space and should not be used as so. Do not sleep in the staff lounge overnight. Be back into your dorm room by 1:00am.

## **CAMP CURFEW**

For security and rest purposes, the Camp WOW curfew is MIDNIGHT. At Camp WOW, we take camp security very seriously. All staff members and volunteers are expected to cooperate in the security process. When off duty, staff members and volunteers should feel free to stay out past "lights out". However, at 1am, camp will shut down, and the only authorized persons outside their dorm will be management. Repeated disregard of curfew will be considered a safety risk, and may result in termination.

## **VISITORS DURING CAMP SESSION**

Friends and family are a great source of encouragement. However, it is difficult to give them the time they need when you are discharging your responsibilities as a camp staff member or volunteer. Therefore, visitors will only be allowed if they are not a distraction from your duties. If management deems necessary, visitors will be asked to leave. All visitors must receive prior approval from management before visiting Camp WOW and must check in at the camp offices.



## **Camper Contact Policy for Current and Former Staff**

### **COMMUNICATIONS WITH CAMPERS OUTSIDE OF CAMP**

The Camp WOW safety standards established to protect campers and insure healthy relationships during camp should be respected outside of camp as well. In addition to camp safety standards, the following policies should be respected in all interactions with campers occurring outside of camp.

- Parents of all campers must approve any and all interactions with students, including but not limited to: email, social network interactions, phone calls, personal visits. No interaction should ever take place without the knowledge and approval of the camper's parents or guardian.
- If a camper requests to be a “friend” on Facebook or similar social networking sites, permission from parents should be granted before accepting these offers.
- Current or former staff members should never be alone with a camper in an unobserved context or location. This is a policy which takes on even more importance outside of camp.
- Current or former staff members should limit connections by gender. Current or former male staff members should not initiate or maintain contact with female campers. Current or former female staff members should not initiate or maintain contact with male campers. Dating relationships of any kind between staff members or volunteers and a camper are strictly prohibited.
- If a family invites a current or former staff member to visit, these visits should never involve spending the night at the camper's home.
- Current or former staff members should never have campers spend the night at their homes for any reason.
- Just like in camp, if a camper shares information that puts them or anyone else in danger, the parents of that child should be notified immediately. When in doubt, err on the side of caution, and contact Camp WOW Management for counsel.

## Policies and Procedures Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Camp WOW's policies and procedures manual for preventing abuse and neglect, and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Camp WOW.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by Camp WOW.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my employment or volunteer position description. While, ideally, I will serve for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that my service or employment is voluntary and that I may choose to end this relationship at any time (if possible, by providing two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Camp WOW and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours that I have worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Camp WOW policies and procedures manual for preventing abuse and neglect.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**[This page to remain attached to Camp WOW Policies for personal reference and use.]**

**Policies and Procedures**  
**Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer’s name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer’s signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**[This page to be signed, detached and delivered to the  
Camp WOW Management.]**