



Staff Training Manual

Section 1: Let's Get Messy

You're a Counselor, Now What?

Congratulations on being chosen to serve as a counselor for the Machias Environmental Summer Session for Youth (MESSY). In your role as a MESSY Counselor you will have many opportunities to expand and develop as well as help create a lasting program that will benefit all the campers coming to Machias. This is the first year that the University of Maine at Machias has chosen to run MESSY so it will be a fun and exciting adventure as we work together to forge a valuable summer program for students who are environmentally oriented, naturally engaged and want to get MESSY.

As a camper, it is important to remember the following items in order to ensure a successful summer:

- Have fun
 - Things may get stressful, but remember your attitude can make a serious difference. If you are unhappy the campers will see this and it will rub off on them. So try to be as positive and happy as possible.
- Be Flexible
 - Considering this is the first year that we are running the program, there may be times that we have to change the schedule or just be overly flexible in when things are done.
- Engage
 - We are here for 1 reason...To make sure the campers are having an excellent time getting MESSY at UMM. With that in mind it is important for the counselors and instructors to be engaged in the sessions and to really get to know the campers. Let's make them feel like they are home while they are here.

What is Messy?

Part of the University of Maine at Machias mission is to serve as the premier ELA school in the nation. ELA stands for Environmental Liberal Arts. The University of Maine at Machias understands the importance of preserving the natural environment and with the location of the University in beautiful Downeast Maine, what better of a place to begin promoting the importance of the natural beauty that exists in the area.

In the Fall of 2008, President Cindy Huggins envisioned an idea of a "Summer Session" offered on campus targeting 7th, 8th and 9th graders. The goal of the camp would be fourfold:

- 1) To offer an entertaining and exciting new summer program for Junior High/High School students
- 2) To promote the natural beauty of Mother Earth and promote ways in which students can work together to preserve the environment
- 3) To offer an opportunity for students to come to the University of Maine at Machias and work closely with some faculty and staff members as well as get involved in its facilities while planting the seed early on about exploring the option of attending college after high school and maybe even attending UMM,
- 4) As a leading school in promoting our new brand “ELA,” it is important that we are not just educating our current students but also community members on everyone’s responsibility in preserving the environment.

During the Spring of 2009, Huggins created a steering committee that would work to bring together the Machias Environmental Summer Session for Youth. The committee is made up of a large group of people covering many areas on campus. Several key members of the MESSY staff are listed below:

Camp Director – Rich Fabri
Camp Coordinator – Naida Pennell
Camp Counselors – Sarah Schmidt, Shaun O’Malley
Camp Instructors – Tora Johnson, Bernie Vinzani, Gayle Krauss
Camp Aides – Larry Frauen, Andy Zsak
Camp Health Office – Derik Lee
Camp Aquatics Director – Kevin Alley
Camp PR/Marketing – Erik Smith
Camp RD on Duty – Nichole Cote
Camp Summer Conference Assistant – Heather Locke

Structure of Messy

Messy is set up in a unique way to allow the campers to engage in both a minor and major area of focus. In the morning’s the campers will be attending sessions in their minor field and in the afternoon all the campers will be working together to attend sessions in their major field.

The campers are given the opportunity to choose 1 of 2 minor fields:

Creative Writing – The creative writing section will allow the campers to work extensively in the UMM Book Arts facility located in Dorward Hall. The students taking this minor will learn how to make paper and even get to make a book themselves which they will be able to use throughout the week for journaling and creative writing about the environment.

Marine Biology – The campers in this minor will have the opportunity to take a trip to the beach to take samples of marine wildlife and examine them in the laboratory. These campers will get

the experience of digging around near a mudflat, taking collections of samples and enjoying Maine's pristine coastline.

Major Area – The campers will all participate in the major area of study. This study will combine not only fresh-water research and sampling but also the use of GIS equipment to map out a specific stream and tributary. At the end of the week, these campers will create a video of their stream and the video.

Section 1: The Camper

How to talk effectively with campers

The most important part of being a counselor at a camp is not the fun, not the food and not the fashion, but more importantly it is listening, listening and more listening to the campers. In fact, you may never know how great it feels to some campers just to have someone to listen to them. Lending an ear is probably the best way to help some campers get out their frustrations and discover themselves.

It is also a good way to keep campers in control and on your side. However, many counselors have trouble getting through to their campers because they make the mistake of talking to them instead of with them. There is a difference.

Here are some helpful tips for getting the most out of a personal conversation with a camper:

- The most important thing is that you listen! It is amazing how much better a camper feels when he or she knows someone is not only listening to them, but actually listening to them and understanding what they are saying.
- Don't interrupt or interject your own personal opinion. If you're talking, you are not listening or learning about the camper, their interests and their feelings.
- Never cut a camper off before they are finished! It hurts their feelings. If you really have to get going, say something like: "I really want to finish this conversation, but I did not realize how much time has passed. Tell you what: Let's continue this conversation later."
- Ask questions of the camper to show that you are actually interested in what they are saying. The camper will feel like they really have a friend.
- Make eye contact! Don't just sit there taking in the scenery. You've got to let the camper know they have your undivided attention! Don't let your mind wander or drift from the conversation.
- Some campers make small problems out to be catastrophic! But to them they may very well be. Understand this and sympathize with it. If a camper comes to you for help, try to see the problem through their eyes, not your own. Everybody looks at things differently, but in counseling, a camper's problem should be as important to you as it is to the camper!

- Don't think you can handle the same problem with a different camper in the same way. People do not always see the same situations in the same light. Remember to be a situational leader and use the appropriate leadership style based upon the situation and the person. Feel each camper out and think about how you would handle things according to the feelings of each individual camper.
- When you are having a discussing with a camper, try to remain calm, rational and logical. If the camper wants to get out their frustrations by creaming, yelling and jumping up and down let them. Don't say anything to them until they realize they are not getting anywhere (although there's nothing wrong with releasing tension), and they say something like, "Do you feel better now? Good! Then let's calm down and see if we can come up with a plan to help you out." Remember everyone needs to release
- Try not to give too much advice if you can help it. Instead, let the camper do most of the talking and working out their own problems (teach them to think for themselves). If they ask you a question as to what they should do about their problem, you should reply with, "What do you think?"
- Most people (campers included) already know the solutions to their problems. Sometimes they just want to hear it from someone else to justify their own thinking. Help them to say what they think is the solution and then tell if you agree with it or not by giving your opinion. Remember you want to teach the camper to stand up for themselves and think on their own.
- If you ever feel the need to change a camper's point of view, just inject several other ways of looking at the situation. Open up different perspectives and "steer" the camper in the right direction. Don't command what's right and wrong. You may just want to try asking them to give your way a shot because you think it is best. Give them the pro's and con's of whatever they are doing and whatever they decide.
- Remember...Campers come from all backgrounds and all lifestyles and some may need more attention than others. The goal is to balance your attention with all of them and build a strong friendship with them so they will open up and be open to talking to you.

Development of a Camper (Pre-adolescent/Adolescent)

Campers all develop differently, however below is a guideline for developments based upon the age of the individual child:

The Pre-Adolescent (9-13)

Physical Development

- A "resting period" followed by a "growth spurt" anytime between ages 9-13
- Boys mature as much as two years later than girls
- Girls are usually taller and heavier than boys
- Reproductive organs maturing. Secondary sex characteristics developing.
- Rapid muscular growth
- Uneven growth of different parts of the body
- Enormous but often capricious appetite

Characteristic Behavior

- Wide range of individual differences in maturity level
- Gangs continue, tough loyalty to the gang is stronger in boys than in girls
- Interest in team games, pets, television, radio, movies, comics. Marked interest differences between boys and girls.
- Teasing and seeming antagonism between boys and girls
- Awkwardness, restlessness and laziness common as a result of rapid and uneven growth
- Opinion of own group beginning to be valued more highly than that of adults
- Often becomes overcritical, changeable, rebellious and uncooperative
- Self-conscious about physical changes
- Interest in earning money

Special Needs

- Understanding of the physical and emotional changes about to come
- Skillfully planned school/recreation programs to meet needs of those approaching puberty as well as those who are not
- Opportunities for greater independence and for carrying more responsibility without pressure
- Warm affection and sense of humor in adults
- No nagging, condemnation or talking down
- Sense of belonging, acceptance by peer group

The Adolescent (13-15)

Physical Development

- Rapid weight gain at beginning of adolescence. Enormous appetite.
- Sexual maturity, with accompanying physical and emotional changes. Girls are usually about two years ahead of boys
- Sometimes a period of glandular imbalance
- Skeletal growth completed, adult height reached, muscular coordination improved.
- Heart growing rapidly at beginning of period.

Characteristic Behavior

- Going to extremes, emotional instability with “know it all” attitudes
- Return of habits of younger children – nail biting, tricks, impudence, day-dreaming
- High interest in philosophical, ethical and religious problems. Search for ideals
- Preoccupation with acceptance by the social group. Fear of ridicule and of being unpopular. Oversensitive and self-pity.
- Strong identification with an admired adult
- Assertion of independence from family as a step towards adulthood
- Responds well to group responsibility and participation. Groups may form cliques.
- High interest in physical attractiveness
- Girls usually more interested in boys than boys in girls, resulting from earlier maturing of girls

Special Needs

- Acceptance by and conformity with others of own age
- Adequate understanding of sexual relationships and attitudes
- Kind, unobtrusive, adult guidance which does not threaten the adolescent's feeling of freedom
- Assurance of security. Adolescents seek both dependence and independence.
- Opportunities to make decisions and to earn and save money
- Provision for constructive recreation. Some cause, idea or issue to work for.

Working with Boys in a Summer Camp

Below are six steps to remember when working with boys in a summer camp environment.

- 1) **Remember boys value choice and control:** To the extent that you can give boys choices about when and how they enter the water, for instance, or in which order they take a swim test, you will elicit their cooperation.
- 2) **Avoid Power Struggles:** Because issues of hierarchy and dominance are so salient for boys, it is best if you can finesse the power issues much of the time. (This is difficult for college-age counselors who are just feeling their own adult power).
- 3) **Silently accept boys' fears or acknowledge them light-heartedly:** Boys are often humiliated by being afraid; it offends their sense of masculinity, so do not spend a lot of time talking about their fears. Either accommodate them silently or acknowledge them lightly and provide a boy with a way out. (Example: A counselor saw that a boy was afraid to jump from the high diving tower at a pool, so the counselor climbed up next to him and held out his hand and said, "Let's jump together.")
- 4) **Throw yourself into an activity with "boyish" enthusiasm:** Boys respond to the energy of their fathers from early in life. If you are excited about an activity, your enthusiasm will serve as a form of leadership, and they will respond to it, as long as it is not false or manufactured.
- 5) **Boys respond to the quiet confidence of their counselors:** One of the most important things that mothers provide for boys who are playing or taking risks is confidence in them. A mother's silent trust supports them. You do not have to constantly coach, encourage or cheer on boys when they are confronting a task. Your silent confidence is enormously helpful to them. Too much booster-ism can turn them off.
- 6) **Peer pressure is one of the most powerful force in the life of boys:** Let the presence and example of other boys do its work. As a counselor, you do not have to run everything with your instructions and your direction. Boys appreciate it when they are not being led all of the time.

Tips for Good Health

Although MESSY does have a Health Official on site, there are several things that the counselor can do in helping assess campers overall health and wellness. The following list contains some good preventative measures:

- See that clothes are changed daily
 - See that campers are dressed properly for the weather
 - Make sure proper footwear is worn. Shoes are required, socks recommended. Both should be dry.
 - Hands should be washed with soap and water for 15 seconds before every meal.
 - People with runny noses should use tissues
 - Campers and staff must get proper rest
 - See that your campers are protected from sunburn, poison ivy and bug bites.
 - Campers should brush their teeth and wash their faces daily
 - Campers should shower regularly. Daily swimming is not a substitute for showering
 - Be aware of eating habits and make sure children are eating properly
 - Regular use of the restrooms are important. Luckily for us, we have modern restrooms and do not have to worry about “bolos” or outhouses.
 - Campers should drink plenty of water. Encourage 1 glass of water at each meal.
 - Always choose safety over fun when campers are engaged in physical activities
 - Know the special needs and limitations of the campers in your group and watch out for them
- Counselors are expected to set a good example with their own behavior in matters concerning health. Not getting enough rest is a sure way to get sick. Counselors can encourage good health in their campers by making things like washing hands and brushing teeth an activity.
 - With regards to health and safety, an ounce of prevention is definitely worth a pound of care. Good judgement on the part of the staff is vital to maintaining proper health standards. You need to act in a way that a parent would act if he or she were present. Do not overlook your own health!
 - Campers come to camp healthy and we want to send them home healthy. Sending campers home with with poison ivy or a soar throat does not generate goodwill. Part of our job is to run this camp in a way that promotes good health so that campers will want to come back next year.
 - When, in your judgment, a camper should see the Health Officer, do not prescribe what action the Health Officer should take. Simply tell the camper to see the Health Officer.

Handwashing

Handwashing is the single most important measure one can take to prevent illness. Many people including adults, do not wash their hands as often or as well as needed. Hand washing is a key, often overlooked behavior important for food safety, disease prevention and personal health.

Wash hands:

- After using the bathroom (95% report of doing so, only 68% of people are observed doing so)
- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing. Hand washing prevents the spread of disease
- Before eating or handling food.

- After taking out the trash, picking up litter, or sweeping/using a dustpan
- After engaging in outdoor land-based activities (sports, petting animals, etc)

Health Concerns for Campers and Staff

As a counselor you might be the first person that a camper will come to for advice on one of these problems. Also as a counselor you will probably be the first one to notice one of these concerns because of your close proximity of working with the campers:

Poison Ivy: starts as a blotchy red rash that really itches. Some kids are really sensitive to it and can pick it up and spread it around in no time. Other kids have less sensitivity but can get a really bad rash if left untreated. Therefore, it is important that the rash is treated as soon as possible. Send camper to clinic with a clean set of clothes so they can take a shower in special soap and not have to re-contaminate themselves with their old clothes. If the camper has had the rash for more than one day, the sleeping bag or blankets must be laundered to avoid recontamination. We will wash the linens in one of the on campus laundry facilities.

Mosquito Bites: A very common occurrence at camp. Encourage campers to wear bug spray, especially on over night camp outs. Keep an eye on campers who scratch their bites, infection is common and needs to be treated by the Health Officer. Some kids will have an allergic reaction to mosquito bites. This reaction is characterized by excessive swelling or itching at the site of the bite. Any child with an over reaction to a bite should be seen by the Health Officer. Any child with an excessive number of bites should be seen as well.

Bedwetting or Clothes Soiling: Campers can have a hard time getting to the bathroom in time at camp. Any time you find soiled bedding or clothing, discretely remove the items from the campers room and bring them to the laundry room to be laundered. Camper should be seen by Health Officer to rule out bladder infection and a plan must be developed to avoid continuation of the problem.

Lice Infestation: Lice are tiny but visible insects that live in human hair close to the scalp. They feed on blood from the scalp and cause itching. Although lice are not really a health concern they are problematic and must be dealt with as soon as they are discovered or suspected. Lice pass easily from person to person through direct contact. Therefore it is important to remind campers **not** to share hairbrushes, combs, accessories, bandanas or hats. Signs of lice include itching on the head or hairline and actually seeing lice or nits (eggs) in the hair. If you see evidence of lice on one of your campers alert the Health Officer right away. If the Health Officer confirms the presence of lice, the camper will be treated immediately in the clinic. Counselor should return to the camper's room and bag all of that camper's clothes and bedding to be laundered. Other campers and counselors should be checked for lice. Counselors will need to wash all mattresses with a bleach-and-water solution obtained from maintenance.

Impetigo: A bacterial infection that appears most frequently around the nose and mouth. It can be very contagious and needs to be treated with antibiotics right away. It first shows up as a small group of blisters. Later the blisters burst and form a yellowish-brown crust. The skin beneath the crust is red and weeping. If not treated the infection can spread. Alert the Health Officer to any mysterious rashes.

Athlete's Foot: An irritating but harmless condition that is caused by a fungal infection. It can be slightly contagious and very uncomfortable. Remind campers to wear flip-flops in the showers to avoid catching or spreading the fungus. If a camper complains of itching feet send them to the clinic for a footbath and fungal spray. Remind campers to dry carefully between their toes after swimming or bathing. Clean cotton socks help to keep the area dry if closed-toe shoes must be worn. Sandals are a much better choice because they allow toes to breathe and may feel better than gym shoes.

Lake Rash and Swimsuit Itch: Some folks are sensitive to our lake water and break out in a flat red itchy rash usually on the trunk of their bodies. Taking a warm soapy shower immediately after swimming is the best way to avoid lake rash. If the rash is itchy, send them to the Health Officer for some anti-itch cream. Do not allow campers or staff members to wear their wet bathing suits all day long. Tight fitting suits and high humidity can create terrible

rashes where they don't belong. Never let a camper sleep in his or her bathing suit. Dinner is a good time to check with your campers to be sure they have changed out of their suits. If for some reason they are still wearing suits, other than for the across the lake swim, be sure they go back to the room and change right after the meal.

Swimmer's Ear: Is an infection of the external ear canal due to excessive wetness or dryness. You can determine whether an ear ache is Swimmer's ear by asking the patient to pull on their ear lobe. If this causes more pain the chances are good that they have swimmer's ear as opposed to an infection of the middle ear. In either event the person should see the Health Officer to get help with the pain and treatment for the infection. Campers who are prone to swimmer's ear should wear ear plugs when swimming and thoroughly dry their ears after swimming.

Cuts and Scrapes: During their stay at camp most of us have the misfortune of needing a Band Aid for a cut or scrape. Counselors will have simple first aid kits at their use with cleaning supplies, topical antiseptic and Band Aids. If you clean a wound and bandage it, be sure to send the camper to the Health Officer so that we can keep an eye on the wound and be sure it does not get infected. If Band Aids get wet or dirty please re-clean the wound and replace them

Foot Problems: Camp is a terrible place to have feet that hurt. Be sure you and your campers observe the shoe-wearing rule. If you or your campers develop cuts or blisters on your feet be sure to see the Health Officer at the to be examined. Feet can get infected so easily and a sore foot ruins a day at camp.

Falls: Falls account for more than one third of childhood injuries requiring medical attention. The camper aged child is most often involved in a fall related to a sports or recreational activity such as tree climbing, bicycling and organized sports. The injuries most related to sports include extremity injuries, head trauma, abdominal injury and spinal cord or vertebral column injury. Be sure to alert the Health Officer to any serious falls suffered by a camper or a staff member. Injured person must be observed for a period of time to rule out head trauma and serious internal injury as a result of a fall.

Allergies: Some kids will have a long history of allergies and some will have their first allergic symptoms at camp. Symptoms include runny nose, itchy, watery eyes, and constant bouts of sneezing. As a counselor remember that your camper may be miserable with their allergy symptoms. Encourage them to see the Health Officer for symptom relief. Here are some tips on how to distinguish allergies from the common cold. Kids with colds often run temperatures. Allergies do not cause fever. Allergies tend to cause itching of the nose and eyes. Colds do not. Allergies tend to cause constant bouts of sneezing. Colds are characterized by sporadic sneezing. Colds tend to last only 3 to 5 days typically. Allergies last as long as the allergen is present.

Asthma: As with allergies some kids will have a long history of asthma and come to camp with several medications and some kids will experience their first bout of asthma at camp. Asthma has become the most common childhood illness in the United States. Asthma can be triggered by a number of allergens: plant, animal, food, smoke or dust, exercise, cold air, changes in weather or temperature, strong emotions: i.e. fear, anger, laughing, or crying. Signs and symptoms can be different in each child. They can be immediate or progressive. Increased shortness of breath is the most common symptom; a night cough is common. Worsening symptoms include: Restlessness, apprehensiveness (due to air hunger), sweating, tripod position, speaking in short, broken phrases, the child may not be able to lie down. Call for Health Officer to come to camper if symptoms are such that child does not want to walk to the health office. Campers who need short acting inhalers will be allowed to have the inhaler with them. If kids ask use the inhaler more than 4 times in one day they must see the Health Officer for a check up. Counselors should be aware of the signs and symptoms of asthma and have the camper visit the clinic any time asthma flares up. Be aware of triggers and try to avoid them if possible i.e.: if the camper seems to get sick when exercising or when around horses, etc.

Respiratory Infections: Some kids at camp are susceptible to respiratory infections due to the greater number of children living in a small space. Some suffer from lowered resistance to disease due to malnutrition, anemia, fatigue and chilling of the body. Coughing, especially at night or first thing in the morning, is a symptom of respiratory infection and/or allergy. Be sure to alert the Health Officer if any camper in your cabin has a cough. How can counselors keep campers healthy? Be sure campers are eating at meals. Be aware of children who do not seem to eat and explore reasons i.e. they don't like the food, or are they ill? Make sure your campers get enough sleep. Be sure

campers are wearing clothes appropriate for the weather. Are they warm enough? Did they change out of wet swim suits? Are they cool enough on hot days? Are they drinking enough water throughout the day to stay hydrated?

Dehydration: It is easy to become dehydrated at camp. Keep an eye on your campers and remind them to drink water often during the day. Dehydration can lead to headaches and stomachaches and can eventually bring on a fever. Encourage water intake during meals and in between.

Choking: Children are prone to choking on many objects. Food is especially dangerous. Observe your campers while they are eating and discourage shouting or jumping up and down during meals. If a child is choking, get help immediately. Perform abdominal thrusts if necessary. If a camper has had a choking episode but seems well afterward remember to notify the Health Officer so that she can keep an eye out for problems that may develop later.

Sore Throats: Most sore throats at camp are caused by viral infections that pass easily from person to person in close settings. Health Officer should see anyone complaining of a sore throat to rule out strep infection and to treat for pain.

Always err on the side of caution. If you suspect a camper or a staff member is in need of medical attention, act on behalf of that person and report it to the Health Officer. You can never be too careful.

Missing Home and Homesickness

Missing home is a good thing! When people miss home, it means there's lots of love in that home.

Some factors which might cause Missing Home to become Homesickness:

- Over-attachment between camper and parent
- Attachment to friends or pets back home; lack of friends or pets at camp
- Longing for "city life" and customary amusements – TV, video games, and so on
- Lack of privacy in camp living quarters
- Being unaccustomed to doing work
- Lack of skills in doing camp activities
- Being sent to camp against the child's will
- Timidity – fear of the dark, fear of being alone
- Physical factors – indigestion, constipation, allergies
- Absence of someone to lean on
- Noticeable physical handicaps – stuttering, crossed eyes, other

What to look for – Be alert to catch it early:

- Watch for the camper who tends to "blow off" Camp activities
- Watch for the camper who has a tendency to go off by himself or herself.
- Watch especially around mealtime and bedtime.
- Frequent requests to visit the Health Officer for no obvious physical reasons.

Don't:

- Don't shame or publicly embarrass a homesick camper.
- Don't send the camper to the Head Counselor, Health Officer or Camp Director right away
- Don't tell a camper they can call home. (Although this may happen later in the process)
- Don't tell a camper they can go home early. (This is an absolute last resort)

Do

- Let the camper know that everyone, even you, misses home – and that’s a good thing!
- Reinforce the idea of “making it through” the session, which is an important personal goal.
- Find interests and activities that appeal to the camper and keep him or her busy.
- Make the camper feel important and needed by assigning him or her a special duty.
- Find a buddy for the camper – perhaps another staff member.
- Make sure the camper has something to do, with a friend
- Let the Head Counselor know you have a potential homesick camper.
- Ignore hysterical behavior – it is for attention. Deal with them when it is over.

Additional Steps

- Camper sees the Head Counselor; parents notified of the problem.
- Head Counselor consults with Camp Director

Bullying and Scapegoating

A lot of young people have a good idea of what bullying is because they see it every day. Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over. Bullying is ...

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a “group”
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to “gang up” on others, known as scapegoating

There are many ways that young people bully each other, even if they don't realize it at the time. The behavior is insidious; it spreads harmfully in a subtle or stealthy manner during times when campers are unsupervised; and often the counselor is not aware that it is taking place until things get out of control.

So what's wrong with bullying?

- It makes the person being bullied feel miserable.
- Bullies are more likely to drop out of school and get into other trouble.
- It’s guaranteed to ruin the camp experience for the victim, who will never want to return.
- It happens a lot more than some people think!

All MESSY staff must be on the lookout for bullying and its effects. We teach our campers to always be sensitive to the feelings of others. Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullies will be dealt with in a serious manner. **Bullies must be given the message that such behavior is not allowed at MESSY.**

Scapegoating, a variant of bullying, is the process of singling out one camper that all others persecute. It often occurs when campers are frustrated or angry or when the group is composed of campers with differences they have not yet learned to accept. Although those who participate in scapegoating are always in the wrong, there is often some behavior or idiosyncrasy that the victim exhibits which initiates the process. Sometimes, the victim is not even aware that what they are doing is the trigger.

Techniques for Dealing with Bullying and Scapegoating

- Pairing:** A buddy system. Enlist someone to befriend the camper being bullied.
- Giving Information:** Explaining in private how the victim comes across to other campers and how their behaviors, idiosyncrasies and attitudes are projected to others.
- Diversion and Ego Support:** Helping bullies to find other outlets or alternative ways to express themselves, allowing the bully to feel more secure and less dependent on making others feel inferior.
- Group Discussion:** Involving all of the campers in a possible solution. Bullying at times may be avoided if feelings can be expressed and problems addressed through open communication.
- Counseling:** One-on-one with the bully and the victim. Both must examine their own feelings, attitudes, and behaviors to gain insight into themselves and make a change for the better.
- In-Camp Help:** Seek it from members of the leadership staff, the Camp Director, Head Counselor, Health Officer, and others who have experience and training in this area.

If these techniques do not “nip bullying in the bud” the bully must be disciplined by a higher camp authority and removed from camp activities for a brief time. Parents will be called and enlisted in the process of stopping the behavior. If this does not solve the problem, the bully must be sent home.

Discussing Sexual Behavior with Campers

Guideline #1: Staff do not initiate discussions of sexuality.

Campers are stimulated enough by elements in our society without having counselors add to it. Sex is **not** a topic that counselors should bring up unless it is part of an overall, camp-sanctioned program.

Guideline #2: Preempt talk about sex with talk about relationships.

Teens and pre-teens are almost as curious about relationships as they are about sex. Counselors could easily have informal group discussions to talk about the qualities of healthy relationships. Doing so would help set expectations about what is appropriate to talk about publicly at camp by modeling it. The following issues are usually compelling ones for teens:

- How you can tell if a girl/boy likes you.
- What it means to respect the person you care about.
- Having your own likes and dislikes separate from the one you care about. Caring about someone does not mean being joined at the hip.
- That a true loving relationship enhances the rest of your life, and does not take you away from other people or your own interests.
- That sex and love and love and affection are not synonymous.
- Seeing the person you care about for who they are, not who you want them to be.

If some campers become provocative, which with some is always possible, see Guidelines #3 and #4.

Guideline #3: Determine whether campers are being sincere or provocative.

If campers are trying to “shock the counselor” or are getting **over-stimulated** (e.g. silly or provocative), it is important to stop the discussion immediately. The first line of defense is to say, as calmly as possible, “You know that kind of talk is not OK here at camp.” I stress the word “calmly”

because the more irate or defensive a counselor is, the more satisfying it is to the camper provoking him/her and the more the camper will persist. If a camper says, as some have, that they talk this way all the time with their friends, the response should be, "What you talk about with your friends in private is your business, but here at camp it's not OK." If campers still cannot control their own behavior, the second step is to remove them from their audience or their audience from them. If they are still being provocative, arrange (with the Head Counselor or Camp Director) for them to call their parent or grandparent and have **them** say over the phone what it was they were doing or saying. This technique has a deeply sobering effect on most campers. The Head Counselor or Camp Director may need to prep the parents before the camper call.

Guideline #4: Provocative or graphic sex talk is simply unacceptable.

Allowing campers to continue being provocative or suggestive is not good for anyone involved. The quieter, less assertive campers become embarrassed, uncomfortable, and feel unsafe in the presence of such behavior while the more provocative campers become increasingly unmanageable. Persistent provocative sexualized talk on the part of a particular camper may be a cry for help. Children who have witnessed inappropriate sexual behavior often signal their distress by being provocative themselves. Likewise, children who are in danger of acting out sexually may signal their need for help by dropping hints through explicit sexual conversation. In either case, if counselors have any concerns about a camper, they should discuss them with the Head Counselor or Camp Director.

Guideline #5: Counselors should not share their own experience when it comes to sex.

When counselors live in close quarters with campers and a trusting environment is created, there is a risk that the **boundary** between counselors and campers may become blurred. One way the boundary is blurred is when counselors share details of their own private romantic exploits with campers. There have been times when campers have actually waited up for their counselor to come back from a day or night off out of sheer curiosity. In some ways, camp may be the perfect place for children to get their information about relationships, of which sex is "the icing on the cake."

Facts About Teen and Pre-Teen Sexual Behavior

- One in seven TV shows featured sexual intercourse, either depicted or strongly implied. The rate is increasing.
- Two-thirds of all shows from 7 am to 11 pm have some sexual content. Four years ago the number was half that.
- The average age of first intercourse in the US for boys is 16.6; for girls it's 17.4
- 9% of 12-year-olds are sexually active; 16% of 13s; 23% of 14s; 30% of 15s; 42% of 16s; 69% of 17s; and 71% of 18s.
- Sexual intercourse becomes significantly more prevalent after junior year of H.S.; before that oral sex is very prevalent.

Talking to Campers about Substance Abuse

Guideline #1: Know the facts.

The average age of initiation to drugs and alcohol is thirteen. Nationally, 1 in 3 middle school students have tried alcohol and 1 in 6 have smoked marijuana. 13% of high school teens have reported use of drugs such as cocaine, crack, or ecstasy.

Guideline #2: Know the reasons for use.

34% of teens cite “having fun” as their primary motivation to use drugs and alcohol, while 23% cite stress, 16% depression, 14% boredom, and 13% cite fitting in.

Guideline #3: Your influential role is a key in preventing drug use among young people.

Talk to your teens about the choices they face. Lay down your expectations for them (zero tolerance at camp). Hold them accountable for their decisions and actions. Keep them active in fun environments that present positive risk-taking to counter reasons stated above for use.

Guideline #4: Talk to teen about their choices, not yours.

Do not talk about your decisions to use or not use alcohol or drugs. Staff members must simply say, “that is not an appropriate topic, but are you asking because you are facing these types of pressures?” Talk about several facts: 1) there are dangerous effects from use; 2) drugs and alcohol can hamper their brain development (especially in those crucial growing teen years); 3) it can adversely affect their goal achievement (jeopardize academic and athletic performance); and 4) a teenager that drinks alcohol before they are 21 is **four** times more likely to develop an alcohol dependency and one that smokes marijuana is **likely** to use another illegal substance.

Guideline #5: Things you can do.

Pay attention to how your campers are feeling. Watch especially for anxiety, depression, and stress; but also for boredom. Encourage friend making with peer groups that don’t use drugs. Be a good role model.

Section 2: The Counselor

Making the Appropriate Decisions

As staff members you will be faced with the need to make decisions about your behavior, your actions, and your words. You will also field requests from campers who will ask for permission (hopefully) to engage in some activity that is outside the regular camp structure. What will you say or do?

Some of the areas where you will need to make decisions based on what is "appropriate":

- Deciding how to discipline a camper who misbehaves
- What to do if a camper asks you a question about a sensitive topic
- How to respond to someone who says something you disagree with
- How to conduct yourself if you are in a relationship with another staff member
- How to react if you disagree with the decisions of your supervisors
- How to manage the behavior of your campers during meals
- What you can and can't do while using the camp computers on the Internet
- What to consider when planning or participating in a prank
- How to decide if a particular "ghost story" should be told to your campers

What types of things (words ... actions ... decisions) are "appropriate"?

- Things that allow campers to enjoy camp, while not upsetting parents
- Things that help camp run smoothly
- Things that keep campers safe and within the rules while also explaining "why?"
- Things that make your job, or the jobs of other staff members, easier
- Things that lift other people's spirits or make them feel better about themselves
- Things that enhance the reputation of MESSY

Questions you can ask yourself to help you decide what is "appropriate"

- Is the thing I am about to do, or that my campers are about to do, safe?
- Would I say this or do this if the parents of my campers were watching me?
- Would I say this or do this in front of the Camp Director?
- Will anyone else be adversely affected or hurt by what I do or say?
- Am I breaking a camp rule? Am I breaking the law?
- Is my judgment clouded at the moment? Am I caught up in the situation?
- What are the consequences of my decision? For me, others, and for MESSY?
- Will my reaction or my response make the problem worse?
- Would I make the same decision tomorrow after thinking about it all night?
- Am I willing to take full responsibility for this decision or action?
- Would my parents or other staff members I trust, approve?

What to do if you are not sure if something is "appropriate" or "inappropriate"

- Stop. Think. Reconsider. Stall. Count to 10. Hold your tongue. Think. Think.
- If you are still not sure, ask the head counselor or Camp Director.

How to be an Excellent Staff Member

- **Be on time** for all camp activities.
- **Show camp spirit** after meals, during programs, at campfires, and any time the activity calls for excitement and exuberance.
- **Demonstrate concern for camper health and safety** at all times. See that campers eat healthy meals, wear clean clothes, and wash up.
- **Set a good example** with your own personal habits, your dress, your language around campers, and your daily lifestyle.
- **Take care of camp property and equipment.** Put things back where they belong. Clean up after yourself. Pick up litter. Report maintenance needs immediately.
- **Remember that camp is for the campers** and that camper needs take priority over staff needs. Make camp fun for the campers.
- **Help camp run smoothly** by supporting your co-workers, following the rules, offering suggestions, and carrying your weight.
- **Communicate** with your co-workers, your supervisors, and the Director. Remember that nothing can be done about a problem if the people who can change things don't realize that a problem exists.
- **Show respect for your peers** and work to earn other's respect. When there is an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust things will go better.
- **Contribute to the program** in your own special way. You have been hired because you have skills and talents that will add to camp.
- **Be prompt with all written reports**
- **Radiate a positive mental attitude around campers** even when you disagree with decisions. Save controversy for staff-only settings.
- **Help enforce the camp rules**
- **Do your job.** Each position at camp has its own specific set of duties and responsibilities. When in doubt, ask!
- **Go the extra mile** by offering to do that which is not necessarily a part of your job.

- **Observe other staff** as they perform their jobs. Make a point of letting others know when they have done something extraordinary. Counsel others – away from campers – when they have made a mistake.

- **Above all, take care of yourself** by staying healthy, knowing your limits, and maintaining a positive attitude..

Incidents

You never know exactly when something might happen that will require a report to be written, however written reports give a clear description of what happened in a specific situation. Reports are used to keep track of a specific incident as well as documenting the steps that were taken to resolve the situation.

If you have a question about when a report should be written, talk to the Head Counselor and they can inform you if a report needs to be written for a specific situation. However there are situations that should always report to the Head Counselor just so you are all on the same page. Below is a list of some items that you should report to the Head Counselor:

- 1) Campers mentioning committing some type of inappropriate behavior (bullying, vandalism, theft, fornication, sneaking out of the room at night, etc)
- 2) Injuries – Anytime a camper injures themselves it is important to report it to the Head Counselor so that the head counselor can assess the situation and decide if the camper needs to go to the hospital or see the Health Officer on site. All injuries will be documented in a “health log” during MESSY.
- 3) Camper talking about homesickness
- 4) Camper talking about suicide or other harmful behavior

There are some things that you may witness as a counselor without overhearing that should also be reported to the Head Counselor:

- 1) Unusual behavior – If you see any unusual behavior exhibited by a camper (i.e. not eating, not showering, refusing to engage in activities, refusing to engage with other campers, etc) it is important to report it to the head counselor so the head counselor can decide a proper course of action.

Report Writing and Incidents

There may be a time when you will be asked to write a report documenting an incident or situation. When writing a report it is important to do the following:

- 1) Be concise, but clear enough to exactly what happened
- 2) Be objective and stay unbiased. Never interject opinions into the report.
- 3) Write the report in 1st person
- 4) Stick to the facts

- 5) Proofread and check for any spelling/grammatical errors

Disciplining a Camper

If a camper is acting up or misbehaving and you cannot get the camper to cooperate, it is important that the camper's behavior is addressed so it does not ruin the fun that the other campers can have while at camp. If a situation arises and a camper needs to be disciplined, please inform the Head Counselor and that person will decide on the best discipline. The head counselor might also refer some disciplining procedures to the Camp Director.

Terms of Employment

From the time that staff training starts to the time the campers leave on Friday night, counselors are expected to be on campus (unless authorized by the head counselor) and engaged in all activities with the campers.

There will be some periods of free time, most likely in the morning during the "minor" classes however free time will be few and far between so it is recommended that you get plenty of sleep and are well rested for the entire week of MESSY.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Fire

- When a fire alarm sounds, all available staff members will knock on doors as they evacuate the residence hall. Residence Life Staff members will make every attempt to have all individuals leave the building without placing themselves in harm's way. **No one is excused from participating in the evacuation whether a fire drill, false alarm, or real fire.**
- All staff members in the building will respond by evacuating the floor they are currently on. They will first knock loudly on all the doors as they direct residents to the closest exit. Second, the staff members should look for activated smoke heads and pull stations. Third, on the way out of the building the staff member will make sure that all fire doors are closed tightly. It is important that all staff members check in after they have evacuated the building.
- Once the staff member is outside, they should make their way to the front doors of the building and meet the RD or Security and wait for further instructions. In the event that the RD or security is not at the front doors of the building, the staff member who is "on duty" will be in charge of coordinating the evacuation efforts by first contacting campus security and then directing the staff members to exterior doors of the building and wait outside without letting anyone into the building.
- The person "in charge" will coordinate the door assignments and get information about the situation to relay to the Machias Fire Department. If the location of the alarm is unknown, this should be relayed to the fire department upon their arrival to the halls. The fire department will also be told of any areas of the building that were not evacuated by a staff member.
- The individual "in charge" will be responsible for sending staff members to building exits. These staff members at the building exits will be responsible for insuring that residents proceed to Kilburn Commons and remain there until the Machias Fire Department issues an "all clear" announcement. The "in charge" person will appoint an individual to take attendance of those at Kilburn Commons.
- **Please Note:**
- **At the beginning of each semester all staff members will be informed of any residents in need of special assistance in a fire or other emergency (e.g. wheelchair users, hearing-impaired, sight-impaired, etc.) Staff members may be asked to assist these students with disabilities.**
- **Under no circumstances will staff members put their lives in danger in response to a fire alarm. Staff members will use their sound judgment in deciding whether or not their safety is in danger.**

Unwanted Visitors or Strangers

- All campers and staff members will be required to wear their nametags throughout the entire week of MESSY. The nametag will serve as a form of id and will show that a camper or staff member are a part of the MESSY Program.
- If you see anyone hanging around the MESSY campers without a nametag or do not belong to the program, this person and their description should be reported to the lead counselor immediately.

Permission to Leave Camp

- Campers must be given permission to leave camp. If a parent or guardian arrives on campus wishing to take a camper out for pizza or ice cream or to pick that camper up, this must be authorized by the lead counselor.
- On the registration forms for the camp, campers were asked who would be allowed to pick them up from camp for any reason, this will be consulted before campers are approved to leave camp with anyone other than a staff member for an assigned trip.
- Anyone requesting to pick up a camper from MESSY will be required to show a valid Government issued ID (passport, military ID, Driver's License, etc).

Severe Weather

- In the event that severe weather should hit campus or the surrounding area, the following procedures will be followed:
 - o Campers will be escorted indoors and activities will commence indoors
 - o If the campers are out in the field, they will be brought back to campus and backup activities will be planned for them indoors

Youth Protection

- Under no circumstances should a staff member be around a camper when they are in the process of using the restroom facility or changing.
- You should never put yourself in a "one on one" situation with the camper. If you need to meet with a camper and discuss a personal matter, you should do it at a location where you can be seen by other people.
- Two Deep Leadership - This means that you should always have another staff member present with you when dealing with a situation with a camper.

Staff Members on Duty

- During the week of MESSY there will be a Resident Director on Duty that will be making rounds in the building ensuring the safety and security of the residence hall.
- During the week of MESSY there will be a Campus Security Officer on duty until 4a.m. every morning making rounds of campus ensuring the safety and security of campus

- During the week of MESSY there will be a Summer Conference Assistant on duty aiding and assisting with lockouts, etc.
- Contact information for each of these people will be posted around the building.

Computer Lab

- There will be a computer lab located in Dorward Hall for Messy campers to use to check email, etc.
- Messy campers should not be engaging in inappropriate activities on these computers (downloading illegal files, pornography, etc).
- The Computer Lab will be open every night for campers to use.

Buddy System

- As campers travel around campus during “free times” they will be required to always be with a buddy. Campers should never be “alone” on campus unless they are utilizing the restroom or sleeping.

Mail

- Mail for the campers will be delivered everyday during the lunch hour at the cafeteria.

Reporters, Press and Media

- All communication about the University and MESSY to any reporters, newspapers, etc will come from Erik Smith, the Director of Public Relations and Marketing.

Lost/Missing Camper

- In the event that there is a missing or lost camper the following procedures will be established:
 - o Notify the Lead Counselor immediately
 - o The Lead Counselor will serve as organizer of the emergency situation and will:
 - Call the Camp Director and Camp Coordinator
 - Gather as many staff as possible
 - Assign buildings for each staff member to search
 - Talk to all campers and see when was the last place the camper was seen
 - o The Camp Director and Camp Coordinator will be responsible for contacting local authorities and the UMM PR and Marketing Director.
 - o The Camp Director will contact the campers parents and inform them of the situation and all developments

Lost Bather

- In the event that a camper goes missing while we are at an event on the water (canoeing/swimming, etc)
- Contact the Lead Counselor immediately
- The lead counselor will oversee the emergency situation and will:
 - o Contact the Camp Director/Camp Coordinator
 - o Organize staff to begin searching the water for missing camper
 - o Talk to campers to see when the last time the camper was seen
- The Camp Director/Camp Coordinator will be responsible for contacting local authorities and the UMM PR and Marketing Director
- The Camp Director will contact the campers parents and inform them of the situation and all developments