

How to Help Your Child Have a Great Time at Camp

-Understanding Bullying Within the Camp Setting-

- **What is Bullying?**
 - Bullying is aggressive behavior by a child or a group of children who take advantage of the power they have to hurt or intimidate others.
- **What are the Harmful Effects of Bullying?**
 - Simply put, bullying hurts and children can experience both short and long-term emotional consequences when they are victims of bullying. Camp staff is trained to recognize both the overt and subtle signs that a child may have experienced bullying.
- **Bullying in the Camp Setting**
 - Camp is similar to school and other settings in that bullying does occur. Children engaging in new activities, meeting new friends, establishing varying social groups at camp, and sharing living quarters with other campers present challenges to even the most well-adjusted child. The good news is that camps are well equipped to address bullying and help the bully deal with counterproductive behavior, too. Proven supervisory practices, activities geared to the developmental level of individual children, and the promotion of a spirit of inclusivity and caring help children to exert higher degrees of cooperation and self-control.
- **How Can I Help My Child Deal with Bullying?**

Before Camp Begins:

 - Discuss bullying with your child—what it is, why it is unacceptable, what your child's response to bullying should be.
 - Tell your child that you expect them to help a child who is being bullied or excluded.
 - Encourage your child to talk to camp staff—children need support from responsible adults to address bullying.
 - Establish clear expectations about respecting others and gaining respect.
 - Follow-through with a consistent set of rules and consequences.
- **What Can I Do if My Child is Bullied?**
 - Support your child—bullying is not the fault of the child being bullied.
 - Gather information about the incident—who, what, when, where, how?
 - Praise your child for the attempts they have likely made for resolving the situation.
 - Talk with the camp director about consequences for the child who is bullying and help for your child with increased support from other campers and staff.
 - Help your child understand that real friends are not mean to each other.
- **What If My Child Bullies?**
 - Try to get a full understanding of what happened.
 - Ask yourself if there have been any recent changes or negative events in your child's life.
 - Discuss consequences of bullying with the camp director regarding specific episodes and the response from camp staff.
 - Reinforce your rule that bullying must stop.
 - Help your child understand how bullying affects others.

Cooperate with camp director and staff to reinforce positive behaviors in your child.