

## **GLEN BROOK COUNSELOR AND STAFF DUTIES—WINTER CAMP**

You will be the primary caregiver, substitute-parent, friend, and teacher for a large family of children for a week. Any one of those roles can be a bit overwhelming, let alone all at once. But, if you get to know the kids as well as you can and really care about them, even when they cause you grief, the rest of the task will follow more easily and more clearly.

The following checklists are meant to tell you about your responsibilities and to assist you in keeping track of all the items, little and big, that you need to monitor. Remember, anticipating problems and being proactive is far better and easier than reacting after it's already happened.

### **Room / Cabin Duties**

1. Be with the campers at rising bell. See that hands/faces are washed, teeth brushed, hair combed, clothes are clean, and that they (and you) get to breakfast on time.
2. Be with the campers for clean up after breakfast, to help and supervise.
3. Be with campers at rest period. Campers are to be on their own cots, shoes off, and as quiet as possible. Only solitary games are allowed. Get them to use the bathroom before rest period to avoid interruptions.
4. Be with the campers in their room from their bed bell until they are nearly all asleep. Supervise getting ready for bed and read to them each night.
5. A good night of sleep is the single most important factor in the success of the camper. They need far more sleep than they think or maybe even you think. Establish a regular and short routine for bedtime. If you can't get everything done in the time it takes until lights out then you need to bring them in early. Do not keep them up late! The choice of bedtime story you read with them needs to be discussed with your supervisor.
6. Keep on top of the laundry situation every night. Check for lost mittens/clothes and make sure clothes are dry or drying for the following day.
7. There will be counselors assigned to house duty each night on a rotating basis. Other counselors need to be available for backup in an emergency.
8. Avoid excitement before the children retire. Children cannot switch from active to quiet instantaneously like adults can. If you want to get your campers to bed early, a pillow fight will not help you. Well-selected stories and books can be very calming.

### **Health Matters**

You must care for your own health, eat well, and get lots of sleep in order to give your best to the children. Very few adults function adequately on less than 8 hours when they are in an active, stressful, long-term situation like camp. Of course you can get by on less, but it isn't fair to the kids, your colleagues, the camp, or yourself if you don't stay in peak condition.

1. Study each child. Learn their constitution, normal appearance, habits, friendships, personality type, clothing, etc. Read the questionnaires their parents completed.
2. See that the campers get adequate rest including during rest period.

3. Make sure campers shower and shampoo at least twice weekly. A schedule is the easiest.
4. Check finger and toe nails and feet regularly.
5. Make sure campers are having regular bowel movements. Stomach aches and bad breath may be symptoms. Ask the nurse.
6. See that campers change socks and underwear regularly, and other clothing for that matter. Some, boys especially, won't change clothes all summer if you let them. Campers should not sleep in the clothes they wore all day.
7. Let the nurse know if you observe health problems, however minor. Let her decide how important it is. Even sniffles and minor injuries need to be reported.
8. See that all medications go to the nurse at arrival. Campers may not even have Tylenol, etc. in their rooms unless the nurse specifically approves it. You may not give out any meds, including Tylenol, etc., without the nurse's okay. The bottom line is that the nurse is our medical expert.
9. See that campers are dressed properly in wet weather. Keep feet dry! If the weather is cold, especially on trips, guard against hypothermia. Exhausted and dehydrated hikers who have been caught in wet cotton in just 50<sup>o</sup> and a light wind have died. Take precautions to protect from lightning strikes. While in camp, children may not be outside during lightning storms.
10. Make sure that campers are drinking water. Children often forget to drink during the winter, which can lead to headaches, constipation, and irritability.
11. Rooms and bathrooms must be kept clean for health reasons, not just aesthetics. The campers will help with general cleaning but **counselors are responsible for sanitation of the bathrooms.**
12. If a camper appears to have psychological or unusual behavioral problems, discuss it with a director and/or the nurse. Do not try to be a therapist.
13. If a child reveals to you or you suspect child abuse, contact the director and/or nurse right away. Don't go this alone; you are not professionally trained and there are legal requirements incumbent on us.

### **Safety**

1. Be safety conscious. Be ever alert for potential hazards and dangerous situations.
2. Help in every way possible to keep the camp clean and attractive.
3. Check exits for free access; eliminate hazards such as improperly stored items, spills, loose boards, etc.
4. Check all equipment (sports, canoes, tack, vehicles, tools, etc.) before using it and fix or report repairs you cannot do properly.
5. Store all equipment properly and keep storage areas clean and tidy.
6. ***Be alert to the physical and mental condition of the campers. Are they***

***too young, too tired, or too wild to do the task safely? If you have to ask, "Should we be doing this?" the answer is probably NO!***

7. Verify that fire extinguishers are present and charged in your area of responsibility and make sure the campers know where they are. Instruct the campers and practice for a fire or evacuation drill. See the appropriate pages in handbook.
8. Report any maintenance problems to one of the year-round staff.

### **Activities**

*Counselors travel with their cabin group to all activities whether or not the counselor is leading that activity. The one exception is during Fourth period, which is an elective period. During this period, stations are manned by pre-chosen counselors and staff. Campers get permission from their counselor to travel to one of the stations which could include skating at the lake or games in the living room. All campers reconvene with their counselor in the meadow for roll call after fourth period.*

1. Counselors are responsible for campers for the whole period they are assigned. If you finish an activity early, you must supervise them.
3. Roll call is in the meadow at 5:30. *Campers are released to their cabin counselors after roll call and remain with their counselor until supper*
4. The whole camp, including the counselors, gathers after supper to sing for 20 minutes in the living room.
5. Evening activity is organized by rotating groups of counselors. Even if you do not organize the activity of the night, all counselors are required to be present and engaged. The kids love to play with the counselors.
6. The counselors of the oldest groups supervise between the first and last bed bell.

### **Schedule**

1. Activities are taught at 9:15-10:30 am, 10:45-12:00pm, 2:30-3:45pm, and 4:00-5:30pm. There are 15 minutes between classes so please give campers enough time to put away gear and change clothes if necessary before the next period.  
Meals: Breakfast: 8:00am, Lunch: 12:30pm, Supper: 6:00pm
2. Each activity counselor leads or assists the four scheduled periods each day in addition to the regular cabin, meal, all-camp, and rotating duties.
3. Staff who are not primary counselors to groups have additional responsibilities.
4. Wednesday is spent tubing at small, local mountain. The youngest three cabin groups tube in the morning and the older three tube after lunch.
5. Friday afternoon is the Winter Olympics where mixed age groups of campers compete in various winter games and sports.

### Miscellaneous

1. Campers may not use the organ or piano without permission.
2. Campers must get permission from the counselor on duty to check equipment out of the sport shed. The same counselor needs to make sure it is returned.
3. Games are to end and equipment to be put away at the wash up bells so campers can go to the restroom and wash their hands.
4. There is a camper telephone policy. Only a director can authorize use of a phone by a camper. *Normally campers do not get or make any phone calls except in unusual circumstances.*
5. Only a director may release a camper from camp, even to a parent. Refer them to a director. No camper may even leave Glen Brook property with a counselor without a director's permission.
6. You may not release personal information about any camper or staff. Always be discreet and sensitive about any personal information you do have. Not even your fellow counselor friends need to know some of the things about your campers that you will learn. Please remember that people of all ages have private lives. Gossiping about campers or fellow staff is both disrespectful and in poor taste.
7. Very rarely we find a stranger on camp property. Almost always it's a neighbor or stray fisherman, but we cannot ignore the possibility of an intruder. If it seems safe and you are not alone, politely but firmly inquire whether you can help them. Refer them to a director but do not get into a discussion or a "showdown." Report any encounter with a stranger to the director as soon as possible, even if it seemed harmless. Call the police if it seems suspicious and you cannot find a director. Any absentee campers at Roll Call should be reported to the office if not located within five minutes. "No-shows" at any activity need to be investigated as soon as possible. You have to judge whether a camper is just slow to dress or is truly missing and we need to initiate the lost camper protocol. Input from the campers may help you. Habitual lateness should be discussed with the program director. If a camper does not show up on the first day of a session, notify the office and an administrator will phone the parent
8. Take care that you do not allow campers to discuss topics of an inappropriate nature. No camper, of any age, should be discussing or joking about such topics as sex and drugs. Counselors should not discuss these topics with campers or CITs. If you hear campers having an inappropriate discussion, politely and firmly change the topic of conversation immediately. *If this happens repeatedly, contact the Program Director.*