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LIFE CAMPS AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

Code of Conduct

Life Camps Australia wants to provide safe experiences for all participants.

Life Camps Australia requires all users of its services, whether Leaders or Campers, to abide by this Code of Conduct.

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DEFINITIONS

1. Definitions

1.1. **Board** means the Board of Life Camps Australia;

1.2. **Bullying** is any repeated act of aggression which does or might cause embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It can take many forms - physical, verbal, gesture, victimisation, extortion, exclusion or offensive notes/graffiti etc.

1.3. **Campers** means any person attending a Camp who is not a Leader;

1.4. **Camp** means any camp or activity run by Life Camps Australia;

1.5. **Camp Organiser** means the person or people who have oversight of a Camp;

1.6. **Camp Report** means the written report provided by the Camp Organiser to the Manager not more than seven days after the end of the Camp;

1.7. **Constitution** means the rules which govern the operation of Life Camps Australia as amended from time to time;

1.8. **Employees** means paid employees of Life Camps Australia;

1.9. **Harassment**, such as behaviour of a sexual or racial nature, is unwanted behaviour directed towards an individual.

1.10. **Leaders** means all people who attend a Camp for some or all of the time who have any role in organising or running it or who provide services to the Campers in any way. It includes but is not limited to the Camp Organiser, a cabin co-ordinator, cabin leaders, spiritual leaders, junior leaders, trainee leaders, camp Mum or Dad, cooks, first aid officers and support personnel whether they are volunteers or Employees who act as leaders from time to time;

1.11. **Life Camps Australia** means Life Camps Australia Inc.;

1.12. **Manager** means the Manager of Life Camps Australia;

1.13. **Member** means a member of Life Camps Australia;

1.14. **Policies** means the policies and procedures of Life Camps Australia and other relevant guidelines and regulations;

1.15. **Premises** means the location where a Camp is held;

1.16. **Purpose** means the purpose of Life Camps Australia and includes its vision and mission;

1.17. **Statement of Faith** means the statement which shows where Life Camps Australia stands on issues of supreme importance to Christian faith and life; and

1.18. **Values** means the stated values of Life Camps Australia.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEADERS AND CAMPERS

2. Responsibilities of all Leaders and Campers

All Leaders and Campers:

2.1. must report any hazard or potential hazards they identify to a person with authority[1];

2.2. must comply with all lawful instructions given by a person in authority; and

2.3. must not behave in a wilful, disruptive or reckless manner.

3. Responsibilities of all Leaders

All Leaders:

3.1. must uphold and support the Purpose;

3.2. must reflect the Statement of Faith and the Values and in their behaviour and teaching;

3.3. have a duty of care towards each other person involved in a Camp; and

3.4. must be familiar with and at all times follow the Policies and other relevant regulations including, but not limited, to:

3.4.1. Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines;

3.4.2. Child Safe Standards;

3.4.3. Discipline Policy;

3.4.4. Risk Minimisation Guidelines;

3.4.5. Electronics Policy;

3.4.6. Procedure for Disclosure of Child Abuse;

3.4.7. Sexual Harassment Policy; and

3.4.8. this Code of Conduct.

[1] Who the appropriate person to report to is will depend upon the circumstances. It might be a more senior Leader, a Cabin Co-ordinator, a Camp Mum or Dad, the Camp Organiser or the Manager.

LEADER REQUIREMENTS, RATIOS, BEHAVIOUR AND DRESS CODE

4. Leader Requirements

4.1. Before attending Camp, all Leaders over 18 years must provide to Life Camps Australia a copy of:

4.1.1. a Working with Children Check which is current for the relevant period; or

4.1.2. a current VIT (Victorian Teacher's Registration) or interstate equivalent; or

4.1.3. a current police check.

4.2. Each Leader must complete a Safe Leader Check every 12 months.

4.3. Each Leader must provide a reference from a current pastor, leader or mentor who has known the proposed Leader for at least three years and to whom the proposed Leader is currently known.

Note: Any Leader who is issued with an interim Negative Notice must cease working with Campers until the matter is resolved by the Department of Justice.

5. Leader Ratios

5.1. Camp Organisers must ensure that appropriate Leader/Camper ratios are maintained at all times, noting these will vary between activities.

5.2. Specialised Camp activities (for example swimming, canoeing, water sports, ropes, bikes, horse riding) must be supervised by suitably qualified people.

6. Leader Behaviour

Leaders need to understand that they can have a significant influence on a Camper by what they say and do and by how they act or react to a Camper or to circumstances. Because of this potential to influence, the following are important as they help the Leader to be a positive influence on Campers.

6.1. Leaders are required to:

6.1.1. Respect the personhood of Campers by giving them time and attention and showing respect for opinions they express;

6.1.2. Recognize and affirm the competencies of Campers;

6.1.3. Allow, encourage and maximize participation by each Camper in any group activity;

6.1.4. Recognize that as we guide Campers we may ask them to attempt some things for the first time. Campers must be permitted the right to make mistakes without fear of criticism or rejection;

6.1.5. Acknowledge and encourage Campers, according to age and ability, to be progressively involved in decision-making relating to programs being mounted for them;

6.1.6. Model equality of treatment of all Campers regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, colour, creed or social status and must not unlawfully discriminate against any Camper, instead maintaining strict impartiality;

6.1.7. Model the behaviour and beliefs which Leaders wish to encourage in Campers including but not limited to behaving in a manner that is fair, considerate and honest;

6.1.8. Establish and maintain a child safe environment at Camp; and

6.1.9. Behave in a professional manner, speak using appropriate language and be accountable for their actions.

6.2. Leaders must not under any circumstances ridicule, reject, humiliate, oppress, belittle or bully a Camper and must avoid situations that might cause embarrassment or humiliation.

6.3. Leaders must not engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of Campers. They must avoid sexual talk or behaviour that promotes promiscuity or the acceptance of sexually explicit material. Leaders must not engage in sexually provocative games or make sexually suggestive comments about a Camper, even if such comments are intended to be in fun.

6.4. Leaders must avoid placing themselves or Campers in situations which may give rise to allegations or misrepresentation. This includes but is not limited to:

6.4.1. Leaders must not be alone with a Camper[2] including:

6.4.1.1. not transporting a Camper on their own;

6.4.1.2. not sharing sleeping accommodation; or

6.4.1.3. during any activity or part of an activity.

6.4.2. When with a Camper, Leaders must remain in view of others at all times.

6.4.3. Leaders must knock and receive permission to enter sleeping or private areas.

6.4.4. Leaders must seek permission from a Camper before having any physical contact with them or before adjusting equipment they are wearing.

6.5. Leaders must avoid having 'favourites', must treat all Campers with the same level of friendliness and courtesy and must not show favouritism to a Camper or a small group of Campers through the provision of gifts or extra attention. In most instances, such behaviour focusses on the needs of the Leader, not the Camper. It can create emotional dependence on the Leader and isolate the Camper from their peers.

6.5.1. If a Camper needs extra attention, it must be given openly and carried out in such a way that no secretiveness or exclusivity is perceived by the Camper or others.

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[2] If the Camper is directly related to the Leader (such as a child or sibling) an exception may apply but Leaders are encouraged to not be alone with any Camper for the duration of the Camp.

6.5.2. The principles set out in this clause applies to behaviour towards other Leaders as well as to Campers.

6.6. Where a Camper or Leader is a minor, Leaders are not to:

6.6.1. accept or request to friend, follow or like the Campers' or Leaders' social media channels and/or pages;

6.6.2. arrange contact, including online contact, with Campers outside of Life Camps Australia's Camps unless it is expressly in line with Life Camps Australia's Post Camp Contact Policy; and

6.6.3. photograph or video the Camper without the consent of the Camper and the Camper's parent.

6.7. Leaders must not have, take or be under the influence of any alcohol or illegal drugs for the duration of the Camp.

6.8. Leaders must seek prior approval from the Manager and/or the President before undertaking any activity that might adversely affect Life Camps Australia. This includes but is not limited to:

6.8.1. making statements to the media about Life Camps Australia;

6.8.2. committing to joint initiatives between Life Camps Australia and other bodies; and

6.8.3. entering into any agreement on behalf of Life Camps Australia which does or may involve contractual or financial obligations.

7. Dress Code

7.1. At all times Leaders must dress in a manner that is neat, respectable and modest.

7.2. Leaders (including kitchen volunteers) must wear clothing and footwear appropriate for the activity being undertaken.

PERSONAL PRIVACY

8. Personal Privacy

8.1. Campers, their families and carers are entitled to privacy in personal matters and Leaders must respect this.

8.2. If a Leader believes a Camper has demonstrated or hinted at a problem or abuse, the Leader must report their concerns using the procedure set out in the 'Policy in relation to disclosure of Child Abuse'. For certainty:

8.2.1. Life Camps Australia is committed to reporting any evidence or disclosure of child abuse or any belief on reasonable grounds that a Camper is at need of protection to Child Protection or Child Protection Emergency Services.

8.2.2. Where a Camper does not appear to be in need of protection Life Camps Australia is committed to reporting any significant concerns about the wellbeing of a Camper to either Child FIRST or The Orange Door.

8.2.3. If it is believed that the circumstances are life threatening Life Camps Australia will contact the police.

8.3. Leaders must not under any circumstances invade the privacy of Campers including but not limited to when Campers are showering or in the toilet.

9. Sleeping, showering and use of toilets

9.1. With limited exceptions, males and females have separate sleeping, showering and toilet facilities at Camps. At all times Campers and Leaders must utilise the appropriate designated facilities. The exceptions may be:

9.1.1. For married couples on a Marriage Retreat;

9.1.2. For married couples where accommodation permits; or

9.1.3. For direct family members where accommodation permits; or

9.1.4. Where the Manager and Camp Organiser consider it appropriate in the specific circumstances.

9.2. If separate toilet and shower facilities are provided for Leaders, Leaders must use those separate facilities.

9.3. Leaders with supervisory roles in the facilities must respect the Campers' privacy. If a Leader must enter the facilities while they are in use, the Leader must knock or call out to let Campers know that the Leader intends to enter.

9.3.1. In ordinary circumstances the Leader should not enter the facilities until the Leader has received permission to do so.

9.3.2. If there is an emergency the Leader may enter the facilities without waiting for a response.

9.4. Cleaning the facilities must be scheduled and done at off-peak times when Campers are less likely to be using the facilities.

9.5. To the extent they can, Leaders should ensure that when cleaning is being carried out a sign to that effect is displayed at the entrance to the facilities.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

10. Physical Contact

Life Camps Australia acknowledges that there are times when it is appropriate and desirable for appropriate physical contact between Leaders and Campers. This can occur during activities where equipment needs to be fitted (for example harnesses, helmets or life jackets) or where assistance needs to be provided (for example entering canoes or dismounting from a flying fox). It may also occur in a hug of congratulations or a friendly pat on the back.

10.1. Leaders must use the following principles for where there is any physical contact between Leaders and Campers:

10.1.1. Leaders must not engage in any activity with a Camper that may physically or emotionally harm the Camper;

10.1.2. Physical contact must leave a Camper feeling that their privacy has been respected and that they are safe.

10.1.3. Leader must not do things of a personal nature for a Camper that the Camper can do for themselves.

10.1.4. Physical contact must only occur after the Camper has given permission. For example, ask "May I adjust your harness?".

10.1.5. Physical contact should occur in the open and not in a secretive manner or place. It must occur with other people around.

10.1.6. Physical contact by a Leader must not be especially focussed on one Camper.

10.1.7. Physical contact must only ever be to support or respond to a need of the Camper and NEVER to meet the needs of a Leader.

10.1.8. Any physical contact must avoid body areas such as breasts, buttocks and the groin.

10.1.9. If a Leader does hug a Camper, a “side hug” should be adopted and that “side hug” must only occur in the open and with other people around.

10.2. Leaders must not under any circumstances:

10.2.1. engage in rough or physical games;

10.2.2. participate in inappropriate, intrusive or intimate physical contact in any form; or

10.2.3. threaten or inflict physical punishment.

11. Administering First Aid

11.1. There must be at least one Leader with current first aid training at every Camp.

11.2. If an incident requiring first aid occurs, every effort must be made to have a Leader with current first aid training attend as the primary treatment giver.

11.3. Any Leader required to render first aid or emergency treatment to a Camper must:

11.3.1. involve another Leader who is the same sex as the Camper requiring attention;

11.3.2. leave examination of private areas to health professionals unless such examination is absolutely necessary;

11.3.3. not force or require Campers to remove clothing for an examination;

11.3.4. record their actions in accordance with first aid recording procedures; and

11.3.5. notify the Camp Organiser of the incident.

11.4. The Camp Organiser must include details of every incident requiring first aid in their Camp Report.

BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

12. Bullying and Harassment

Well-organised activities and adequate, consistent and appropriate oversight will minimise the risk of bullying or harassment. However, if it does occur or there is reasonable grounds to suspect it has occurred or may occur:

12.1. Incidents must not be ignored and must always be treated seriously.

12.2. Leaders must take appropriate action including but not limited to:

12.2.1. Intervention, such as:

12.2.1.1. asking the perpetrator to stop;

12.2.1.2. redirecting the perpetrator and distracting them from their poor behaviour;

12.2.1.3. separating the perpetrator from the person they are bullying or harassing; and/or

12.2.1.4. encouraging the perpetrator and the person they are bullying or harassing to get to know one another better;

12.2.2. asking for assistance from an independent person (such as a Camp Mum or Dad); and

12.2.3. reporting incidents to a person with authority[3].

[3] Who the appropriate person to report to is will depend upon the circumstances. It might be a more senior Leader, a Cabin Co-ordinator, a Camp Mum or Dad, the Camp Organiser or the Manager.

12.3. The Camp Organiser must include details of serious or repeated bullying or harassment in the Camp Report.

12.4. Extreme issues of bullying or harassment that occur at a Camp will be managed as if a dispute under the Grievance Procedure set out in the Constitution, even though the parties to the dispute may not be Members.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

13. Discipline of Campers by Leaders at Camps

Leaders must adhere to the requirements of the 'Discipline Policy' when dealing with Campers who breach the Code of Conduct, misbehave or are non-compliant.

14. Discipline of Leaders at Camps including Serious Misconduct

The Manager, the Employees, the Board and/or Camp Organisers (as relevant) must adhere to the requirements of the 'Discipline Policy' when dealing with Leaders who breach the Code of Conduct or the Policies.

15. Disciplinary Action against a Member

Life Camps Australia must adhere to the Discipline Policy if disciplinary action is taken against a Member.

COMPLAINTS

16. Complaints in relation to a breach of this Code of Conduct must:

16.1. be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy; and

16.2. be included in the Camp Organiser's Camp Report including details of the complaint and any action arising.

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