**MECHUWANA**

**VOLUNTEER** **HANDBOOK**

**2013**

**MECHUWANA**

**P.O. BOX 277**

**WINTHROP, ME 04364**

**(207) 377-2924**

**mechuwana@fairpoint.net**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*It is the purpose of Camp Mechuwana to complement the local church ministry by providing a unique Christian setting for persons of all ages for personal growth and experiences, which enhances one’s relationship to God, neighbors, and the natural world.*

**Introduction**

Since Mechuwana began, it has relied on volunteers to run and staff the summer program. In 1948 when the then Methodist Church bought this property there was a conscience decision to run the programs with volunteer leaders and volunteer staff. This decision has added to the richness and quality of our program, and at the same time given thousands of people the opportunity to put their faith into practice. You continue that tradition that has grown to where over 200 adults volunteer each year.

**We hope that you find this handbook helpful. It is meant to give you some guidelines and let you know what is expected of you as a counselor. The first section of this handbook covers Mechuwana’s policies related to child safety. It is necessary for you to read the entire handbook before volunteering. You will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that you have read and understand the information in this handbook.**

We recognize that counseling is a hard job; we are here to assist you, please let us know how we can help. We think you will find that taking part in this ministry is both rewarding and fulfilling. Thank you for taking part in the ministry at Mechuwana. Your role here is vital to the success of our program.

**VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Be at least 18 years of age.

2. Adaptability to the outdoor environment.

3. Desire to work with children and other volunteers.

4. Ability to share responsibilities.

5. Good communication skills.

6. A strong faith and willingness to share that faith with others.

**GENERAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION**

Plan to arrive the day before camp starts. You will receive a letter or phone call from your dean giving you the times for this meeting and further information about your week. This pre-camp meeting is very important. If some reason you have not heard from your dean, please call the camp and let them know. Please make sure all of your paperwork is done and sent to camp before you arrive.

An orientation by the camp director and the program staff will take place before your camp begins. This is a mandatory.

**POLICIES RELATED TO CHILD SAFETY AT CAMP MECHUWANA**

**Hiring volunteer/staff**

* **Individuals fill out an application, which includes:**
  + Current address
  + Social security number
  + Date of birth
  + Past work history
  + Three references
  + Camp experience
  + Education
  + Statement on harassment
  + Criminal record disclosure
  + Permission for criminal record check
* **Disclosure statement developed by American Camping Association**
  + Signed every year
* **Check of State of Maine and National Sex Offender listings.**
* **Paid criminal background check done by nationally recognized company**

**Health Screening**

* **Each camper meets with nurse before camp. At that time the following issues are talked about:**
  + All medical issues including medication.
  + Dietary needs
  + Psychological issues
  + In general any special needs the camper, parent, or guardian wishes to express to camp medical staff.
  + All medical needs will quickly be taken care of by nurse throughout the week Camp has nurse coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week while camp is in session.

**Photograph Permission Form**

* Parents/Guardians are asked to give permission for photographs or videos taken at camp to be used for advertising or promotion of camp.
* Parents have a right to not grant this. In those cases camp staff and counselors will not take photos of that camper.
* **Additional policies concerning child safety:**
* **Physical Safety**
  + Campers should wear appropriate clothing, including footwear
  + Campers should stay on marked trails and not run unless part of the activity
  + Safety orientation will be covered at all camp activities i.e., boating, swimming
  + All cabins have hard-wired smoke detectors and emergency exit plans
  + Severe weather guidelines are posted and gone over by camp administration
  + Camp has a “no tolerance” policy when it comes to bullying or physical violence
  + Campers are supervised at all times while they are at camp

**Emotional Safety**

* + Bullying or making fun of others will not be tolerated
  + Issues such as homesickness are taken seriously and dealt with in a caring, loving manner
  + Use of buddy system is implemented at all times
  + Campers are treated with respect
  + Given positive feedback constantly
* **Behavior Management**
  + Our camp’s philosophy concerning behavior management is that we will make all attempts to create a positive environment. We believe that by giving constant praise and positive reinforcement for good behavior, we can eliminate the negative behavior.
  + Negative behavior that is violent or bullying in nature must be reported to Dean or Director.
  + Language is a powerful tool. What we say can offend or hurt someone else. We must remind others of this as well. When you hear someone say something offensive you must have the courage to let that person know it is offensive and why.
* **Sensitive Issue Policy**
  + Sensitive issues are part of camp and campers’ lives. Issues could include sexual identity, religious beliefs, drugs and alcohol use, and their home life. We hope that Mechuwana is a safe environment that allows campers to express themselves. We are also aware that these conversations can make some campers, parents, and counselors feel uncomfortable.
  + If campers feel the need to talk about sensitive issues, camp administration can help to set up appropriate times and people for campers to talk to. If camp counselors of staff need to talk about sensitive issues, we encourage them to talk to camp health staff and/or the director, and they should not speak about these issues with their campers. That is not appropriate.
  + It is important to keep everyone’s feelings in mind.

**THINGS TO REMEMBER**

* **Do not judge**
* **If the subject is uncomfortable for you, it probably is for others too**
* **Invite the camper to talk to the nurse if you feel it is necessary**
* **Do not let individual campers dominate the subject**
* **Watch for discrimination after the talk**
* **Do not be afraid to end conversation if not appropriate**
* **Remind everyone that they are cared for and loved**
* **IF CAMPERS DISCLOSE PERSONAL AND POTENTIALLY HARMFUL INFORMATION**
  + Camp is a place where children sometimes disclose information about their lives. We have a legal and moral obligation to pass that information on to people in a position to report it.
    - Those issues are:
      * Harming themselves or another person; or
      * Being physically or emotional abused by another person.
  + If anyone at camp (camper, counselor, or staff) disclose either of these two things, then the Dean and Director must be notified immediately so proper reporting can occur.
  + See Appendix A for a list of Indicators of Abuse.

**Keeping the Campers and Staff Safe**

* **Conduct**
  + The nature of the counselor’s/staff position is such that he/she is responsible for the health and well-being of children. As a counselor/staff your actions and appearance reflect on the entire organization. The following actions are deemed instances of gross misconduct and therefore grounds for immediate dismissal:
    - Use or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs
    - Leaving an “on duty” post uncovered
    - Molesting, or in any way, physically harming another person
    - Inappropriate sexual conduct
* **Sexual Harassment**
  + Sexual Harassment is defined as: “The use of one’s authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal; or creation of an intimidating hostile or offensive working environment through verbal or physical conduct or a sexual nature” (U.S Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Definition).
  + Mechuwana is a place where children and adults come to have fun. It is also a place in which all people should feel safe and respected. If someone is feeling harassed or uncomfortable, then Mechuwana is no longer a “safe” environment for this person. We want to ensure that we are providing a caring Christian experience for each and every person who comes here. **Therefore harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.**
* **NEVER BE ALONE WITH A CAMPER**
  + This has always been our number one rule for camp staff and counselors. If a camper says that you did something to them, and you are alone with them, then you have no witness to prove otherwise. If you need to talk with a camper privately, do it in an open space with others around.
  + We always have enough adults so that you can ask someone to be with you if you need to speak with a camper. **THERE IS NEVER A REASON TO BE ALONE WITH A CAMPER.**
  + Mechuwana will not conduct any activity that cannot be done with at least two or more counselors present.
  + All activities at camp can be done in small or large groups. Even when working on an individual project it can be done within sight of many people.
  + **Use the buddy system.** When a small group cannot be used, (for example, at night when going to the bathroom) you must use the buddy system. The buddy system can be two campers; two counselors; or a camper or campers with more than one counselor. It cannot be one counselor and one camper, ever.
* **If you observe any questionable behavior by other camp staff, you are obligated to report that behavior to the camp administration.**
  + Keeping the camp safe for everyone is our main goal
  + The behavior we are talking about is when other counselors are not following the policies the camp has for creating a safe environment. For example, being one on one with a camper.

**Knowing who is on property**

* **All visitors must report to the office.**
  + We try to get all visitors to report to the office by posting signs at the top of the camp road. When they report, we will contact you or physically bring them to you. Only rarely do parents drive directly to the camp. If this occurs, please do not release the camper until you have cleared it through office.
* **Intruder alert**
  + It is always appropriate to ask a person you do not know if they have reported to the office, or simply who they are.
  + We are a small community, therefore we know each individual and their reason for being in that community is clear.
  + Simply put, no one is to be on the property without the permission and/or clearance of camp administration.
* **Release of campers**
  + Campers fill out a release form that stays with the Dean for the week; only persons listed on that form are allowed to pick up that camper.
  + We often have campers who must come and go for personal reasons during the week. Camp administration will set up a schedule and go over that schedule with staff. If for any reason that information changes, including who is allowed to pick up campers, staff will be notified.
* **Camp staff is on duty 24 hours a day**
  + During the day the camp office will be open
  + At night, two staff people will be on duty and conduct rounds. Meeting with each area of camp, they will let the leadership of that area know how and where they can contact them.

**Social Media and Electronic Communications**

* Social networking can be a positive way to for individuals to communicate with others and be a creative means of self-expression.
* As staff/counselor, you may be identified as a representative or spokesperson for camp. In light of that possibility, Mechuwana requires the following guidelines for staff/counselors when using social networking in relationship to Mechuwana’s programs, activities, its campers, and other staff/counselors:
* Staff/counselors must be respectful
* Staff/counselors must not use obscenities, profanity, or vulgar language
* Staff/counselors may not disparage the camp, campers, or other employee
* Staff/counselors may not harass, bully, or intimidate other employees or campers. These behaviors include but are not limited to: derogatory comments with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, humiliating, or demeaning comments, and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another staff/counselor or camper
* Staff/counselors may not communicate in a sexually suggestive way
* Staff/counselors may not engage in conduct that is prohibited by camp policies, including but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, and bullying
* Staff/counselors may not post pictures of any camper whose parent/guardian has denied that permission
* Staff/counselors may not post photos of anyone if they are inappropriate and do not follow the guidelines above.
* Camp Mechuwana has an official Facebook page where staff/counselors and parents are free to post as long as they follow the guidelines listed above.

# CABIN COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Campers will arrive Sunday with a range of emotions. Some will be excited, some scared, some nervous. It is your job to make them feel welcome and comfortable. Help them settle in, chat with their caregivers, and introduce them to a cabin mate. The first 20 minutes of camp are very important. That time sets the tone for the week and makes caregivers feel comfortable about leaving their camper at Mechuwana. **Remind them about pick time!!**

**Hold a cabin meeting the first night of camp**. At this meeting, go over the cabin rules that are printed on each cabin door. Let them know your rules and expectations. Creating a safe and friendly environment is very important; it is everyone’s responsibility to make sure every camper is made to feel special and cared for. During your meeting please let them know that making fun of, teasing, or any negative activity is not allowed at camp and could result in them being asked to go home if they engage such activities.

Although most of your time at camp will be scheduled, there are times when you will be responsible for what your campers are doing. A good example of this would be a night when every camper is in his/her own cabin. Books or quiet games can come in very handy during such a time.

1. Oversee camper personal care and needs including: hygiene, changes of clothing, and care for personal effects. Assist in creating a caring supportive environment. Keep in mind the spread of lice can be greatly reduced by not sharing hats, pillows, and other personal items.

2. Assist medical personnel in camper health care. Report and or send campers to nurse for first aid and other symptoms suggestive of health care assistance. Make sure you are following up on directives from the nurse.

3. See that campers adjust to the camp environment. Be watchful for homesickness and knowledgeable of steps to take if it occurs.

4. Get campers to activities, meals, and other scheduled events on time and accounted for.

5. Supervise campers at mealtime: intake of basic food requirements, establishment of pre-meal hand washing, good eating habits, manners. Any food issues should be communicated to camp director or dean.

6. Supervise daily cabin cleanup and impress upon campers the need for cleanliness throughout the day.

7. Supervise special cabin activities. Plan **with** campers, not **for** them.

8. Assist and/or lead in planning and implementing of specific activities and programs as required.

9. Supervise campers or ensure supervision and accountability for your campers at all times. Remind them to use the buddy rule and always travel in groups of at least three.

10. Assist in building a supportive team with your deans and other volunteers.

11. Fill out any reports needed for incidents/injuries

12. Fill out a health form and secure all prescription and nonprescription medications with the camp nurse.

13. Always think safety first.

**THE ROLE OF YOUTH LEADERS**

During your stay at Mechuwana you may have a youth leader assigned to you and your cabin. This is a very important program at Mechuwana. We must take seriously the dedication and willingness of these young people to give back to this ministry.

Each youth leader must go through an intense training each year before they are allowed to counsel. They will come to camp excited and eager to do their part.

Please attempt to be in partnership with them as they learn from you what it means to be a good counselor. The role of a youth leader is to assist you in any way they can. They can be a tremendous asset to you. Let them have some responsibilities. They can give you some much-needed rest in the course of a week.

**ITEMS DEANS SHOULD GO OVER WITH YOU THE FIRST NIGHT OF CAMP**

**SAFETY ORIENTATION**

* + - * Go over with campers general safety regulations.
      * Explain boundaries and off-limits places in your area, including waterfront. Explain that no one is to leave the area without you or other approved supervision.
      * Physical hazards on the site can be avoided simply by telling campers to stay on marked trails. At all times we should be traveling on marked trails.
      * Explain the buddy system.
      * Make all campers aware of the emergency exits in their cabins.

## EXPECTATION OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR BY CAMPERS

During your orientation please let campers know what you expect from them as far as behavior goes. These are some general ones:

* + - * Please do not run at camp unless during a running activity
      * Stay on marked trails, for your safety and to help the environment
      * Stay away from closed areas
      * We are a drug-free community
      * Wear appropriate, closed-toe footwear at all times
      * Use appropriate language
      * Treat others with respect and kindness
      * Bullying and physical violence will not be tolerated
      * Be where you are supposed to be at all times, use buddy system
      * Obey cabin and bathroom rules

**CAMP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Swimming and Boating: All swimming and boating are under the direction of the waterfront director and staff. Campers and counselors will be given a skill check (swim tests/tip tests) the first day of camp. Even if you have volunteered for many years, this test must be given every year. It is not only a state law but also a standard of the American Camping Association.

Store: No food is sold at Mechuwana. The camp store carries such items as stamps, postcards, t-shirts, stuffed animals. The store is a camp service and the profits are small. In order to avoid loss or theft, campers are encouraged to deposit their personal money into the store at the beginning of the week. Any balance will be returned on Friday night.

Mail: Outgoing mail in placed in the mailbox in the Commons. It will be collected each day after breakfast. Incoming mail will be distributed to the deans at lunchtime. If you need to get something in the mail, let the office know and we can take it for you.

Cars: All cars are to be parked in the designated parking lots. They must be locked. Cars are not to be used in camp except for emergencies. The speed limit on the camp roads is 10 mph and loud music should not be blaring from the vehicle.

Trips: No counselor should leave camp for any reason without checking with the director and without the knowledge and approval of the dean.

Telephones: For safety reasons, the camp phone must not be used for personal calls. The number where you can be reached for an emergency is (207) 377-2924.

Cellphones: We understand that many counselors will carry their cell phones, but please be aware of your cell phone use. You shouldn’t use it in front of campers. Campers should not use your cell phone.

Liquor, drugs, and smoking: Mechuwana does not allow the use of drugs or liquor. Mechuwana is a SMOKE-FREE environment. Smoking is not allowed on camp property. If you must smoke, please contact the director for specific information.

Gratuities: Acceptance of gratuities by summer staff or volunteers is strictly prohibited.

Conduct: The nature of the counselor’s position is such that he/she is responsible for the health and well-being of children. As a counselor your actions and appearance reflect on the entire organization. The following actions are deemed to be instances of gross misconduct and therefore grounds for immediate dismissal:

\* Use of or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs

\* Leaving an “on duty” post uncovered

\* Molesting, or in any way physically harming another person

\* Inappropriate sexual conduct

Leaving camp property: Counseling staff need to have this approved by the dean and let the camp office know so we can make sure supervision responsibilities are being upheld.

Romantic relationships: Each staff member is expected to conduct himself/herself and their relations with others in a manner as to achieve the high objectives of the camp. Make sure you conduct yourself in a respectful manner in front of campers.

Chain of command: Counselors are directly responsible to their deans. If a problem arises, counselors should speak with their dean first. If the problem cannot be resolved or you feel it was not handled correctly, you can then go to the director.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If you need assistance with any type of emergency you may contact any Mechuwana staff person. We have people with first aid at every location in camp.

Camp nurse is available and health center is open 24 hours a day.

There will be a staff person on duty every night. They can be reached by calling the camp phone. Phone numbers are posted in every dean’s cabin. You will also find specific emergency policies.

**For accident or injury**

* Do not move the injured person unless there is a physical danger.
* Call 911 if injury requires treatment for life-threatening situations, such as someone not breathing or for heavy bleeding.
* Contact camp personnel by calling the camp nurse or camp number.
* The medical staff will assess situation.
* Fill out proper paperwork when asked.

**Lost person**

* Notify Dean and camp staff as soon as you have searched your immediate area this should take no more than 10-15 minutes.
* Camp personnel will put into place a “lost camper” search procedure

**Fire**

* There are two areas of fire concern at Mechuwana: 1. fire in a building and 2. fire in the woods.
* Call 911 unless the fire can be safely extinguished with a fire extinguisher.
* Get campers to a safe area and do a camper count. From there you will be told where to go.
* Fire extinguishers are located throughout camp. Be familiar with where they are in your camp area.

**Severe weather**

If severe weather is in our area, camp staff will inform you. If time allows, you may be asked to bring your campers to a safe building such as the Commons. Generally we will ask you to keep your campers in your area.

**Keeping an accurate count of campers is very important during any general emergency.**

## CAMPER SUPERVISION RATIOS

Mechuwana follows or exceeds the American Camping Association guidelines for counselor to camper ratios.

**For cabin life, meal times, and general camp activities for resident (overnight) camps**.

Camper Age Number of staff Overnight campers

4-5 1 5

6-8 1 6

9-14 1 8

15-18 1 10

Youth leaders who are 16 or older may be counted as part of that ratio since they have had training specific to supervision of campers. Remember, never be alone with a camper. Areas where we ask for more staff members are: swimming, boating, and field games. We then follow a one leader to six campers, no matter the age of camper, ratio. Permanent staff members are included as supervisors.

For the safety of everyone, staff is encouraged to work in pairs. At every camp activity there should be at least two staff people. The only exception to this might be sleeping at night in cabins.

## Supervision of Campers

As a person responsible for the supervision of campers, you must know where your campers are at all times. This can be done in a number of ways. Assigning each camper a number and then having them count off is a good technique. Remember if you need help, go to your dean, they know where to locate anyone in camp that can help you.

Nighttime supervision is very important; each cabin will have at least one counselor in it. At no time is a cabin to be left unsupervised. The only exception to this is during a staff meeting that takes place in the dean’s cabin. These meetings should be short, and cabins need to be checked every 10 minutes to make sure everyone is safe.

## Interaction with Campers

When interacting with campers, remember that their needs always come first. Here are additional things to remember:

1. Always respect the camper.

2. Try to use the camper’s first name or nickname that they have chosen.

3. Explain things in terms they understand.

4. Set up rules and expectations that are easy to follow.

5. Give positive feedback constantly.

6. Do not embarrass or ridicule campers.

7. Do not allow anyone to make fun of anyone else for any reason.

8. Be a good role model and take part in the activities.

9. Explain your actions.

10. HAVE FUN!

**THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE**

A good leader does not simply organize a group. He/she teaches the campers to organize themselves into a working group with clearly defined goals.

### What does it take?

* + Dependence on God for guidance, strength, and understanding
  + Willingness to learn new things
  + Emotional maturity
  + Preparation

Studying and understanding this handbook

* + - * Camping experience
      * Familiarity with camp
      * Camp policies
      * Come open-minded and willing to listen
  + The ability to listen to others
  + The ability to recognize the needs of your campers
  + Willingness to learn along with campers.

### To counsel is to help

* + Know your campers
  + Demonstrate that you care
  + Learn to listen
  + Be reachable
  + Be shock-proof
  + Know your limitations

### Some guidelines for the week:

* + Get to know your campers’ names as quickly as you can.
  + Be familiar with your site.
  + Try to find time for individual attention; find out what each of your campers expects from their week at camp.
  + Help the campers get settled into their own space.
  + Explains the camp’s program, and daily schedule.
  + Set your cabin rules; make sure to include a zero tolerance for bullying and physical violence.
  + Come up with a considerate way of waking campers up.
  + Come up with cabin chores.
  + Encourage quiet time during FOB (feet on bunk) or rest time.
  + Set a good example.
  + Be a guide and counselor, not a boss; maintain good discipline without being too strict.
  + Take time to communicate your ideas to campers and to listen to theirs.
  + Sit with your campers during worship, assemblies, campfires, etc.
  + Keep campers’ problems in strict confidence unless sharing them with the director and dean is necessary.
  + Do not hesitate to go to the camp director and dean with problems. You must keep them informed; remember any signs of child abuse or threats to hurt themselves or another person must always be reported. KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS.

### Problem situations

* + **Homesickness**
    - * Try to involve the camper in as much activity as possible.
      * Talk it over
      * Try to discover the causes behind the homesickness.
      * Perhaps it’s shyness or a feeling of being left out; try to get the camper interested in some part of the program for which he/she has a special interest or aptitude.
      * Do not let the situation go more than a day without contacting the dean and the camp nurse.
  + **Bed Wetting**
    - * Is handled best in a casual way.
      * Remind your campers to go to the bathroom before going to bed, suggest that they awaken you if they need to go to the bathroom.
      * When an accident does occur, maintain an attitude of acceptance.
      * The bedding can be cleaned by notifying the dean or camp staff. We will pick it up and clean it and have it back in the cabin while you are out doing daily activities. No one else in the cabin has to know.
      * If talk occurs in the cabin, that could be a good time for a cabin meeting.
      * The camper will still be embarrassed, so continue to give assurance and encouragement.
  + **Illness** 
    - * If you are not sure, check with the nurse at meal time.
      * Anticipate illness and accidents, and plan your first aid procedures…you will be advised by the nurse during the pre-camp meeting the importance of keeping campers hydrated.
      * At the pre-camp meeting, each camp will be given a first aid fanny pack to assist with basic first aid.
  + **Resistance to the Program** 
    - * Try to discover their own interests and adapt the schedule if possible, but also help them see that their own interests are best served through a cooperative spirit.
      * Help them to learn how membership in a group requires awareness of responsibilities as well as rights
      * Speak to the camp director for insight.
  + **Disrespect**
    - * May indicate severe aggressiveness or emotional problems; try to learn as much as possible about his/her background, i.e., family, school, former camp experiences. Overcome the disrespect with a positive and sympathetic approach, “you may not like us, but we like you.”
      * Again, learn the camper’s interests and aptitude, and put him/her to work in these areas as much as possible.
  + **Group Friction**
    - * Friction between members of your group will draw energy away from the program and experiences; talk individually to those in disagreement, and this alone will probably give them a chance to verbalize and realize how petty their differences are; then bring antagonists together and help them have opportunity for learning together how to forgive and how to forget past grievances.
      * In any conflict situation the important thing is to continue to see yourself and the other both as children of God. Give each other straight feedback about what the problem is, and then allow each other to accept or reject the other’s opinion without being defensive.
      * Remember to tell your dean about the conflict; another person’s perspective is very good. Plus it keeps them aware of what is going on.
  + **Discipline in Camp**
    - * Camp Mechuwana staff must use positive reinforcement with campers. That is, to praise campers for good at every opportunity and refrain from put downs, yelling, or other threats. When absolutely necessary, campers may be given time out or denied activities. These methods must be used only after positive steps have been attempted.
      * Process: Counselor attempts to encourage good behavior. Counselor takes problem to dean. Dean brings problem to camp director. Director speaks with camper. If problem persists, camp director calls home and speaks with parent. A behavior contract can then be written up. If camper breaks contract they can be sent home.
      * Under no circumstances should a counselor restrain or hit a camper or knowingly allow a camper to be hit.

\* If you discipline a camper please talk with the Dean about it the day it happens.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

(All information below is also posted in each area’s dean’s cabin)

Emergencies can include: accidents, injury, lost person, fire, severe weather, mental illness, or intruders.

The Director has responsibility for everyone at Mechuwana. Each staff member has the responsibility to react immediately to protect individuals and property consistent with their own personal safety.

In case of an accident or injury, follow these steps to the best of your ability:

1. Do not move the person injured unless there is physical danger
2. Do any first aid you are qualified to perform
3. Get help with dealing with crowd
4. Seek the highest level of certification on the scene
5. Call 911 if required
6. Contact proper personnel (always nurse first), then office
7. Get help from other staff
8. Medical staff will assess situation.
9. Fill out proper paperwork

**OTHER THINGS TO REMEMBER WITH MAJOR INJURIES OR ACCIDENTS**

If you are the primary staff member at the scene in camp:

1. Do not rush or panic.
2. Take charge, be firm and clear with your instructions to campers and other staff.
3. The staff member with the highest level of certification is delegated the responsibility of giving aid to the injured party. The person giving first aid must meet with the nurse within 12 hours to fill out health log.
4. Delegate another staff member to ensure the safety of other campers by taking them away from the scene.
5. Contact health care supervisor as soon as possible; this may mean sending someone or having another person call. Be clear with direction of where you are.
6. Contact or have some contact with office. Ask for assistance at the scene and give clear directions.
7. As soon as scene is stable, collect facts: what happen? how? when? where?
8. Prepare accident report and meet with director.

## ELECTRICAL STORMS

During a storm all outdoor activities will come to an end, campers will return to a safe location, which is provided in each living area.

# INTRUDERS

Unfamiliar persons on the camp property may range from someone lost and looking for directions to a person with intent to do harm to persons or property. Use your best judgment, be observant as to make and model and license number of the car, and physical description of person.

1. Approach person professionally and ask him/her why they are here
2. Refer person to camp office
3. You may ask the person to leave the property
4. Observe them leaving and stay with them (note a lone) as long as they are on property.
5. Contact main office for assistance immediately.
6. If person is threatening in any way remove yourself and call ASAP
7. If you see some at night contact staff on duty, while keeping track of person. Ask that a head count be done in all areas.
8. Explain to campers, if they are involved that everything is o.k. and that they are safe. It is o.k. to let them express their fears.

## KIDNAPPING (release of camper)

## Do not allow anyone to remove camper from camp unless prior arrangements have been made with your dean and camp office.

## Campers will be o.k’d to leave camp only through main office.

* Most campers that leave camp have made prior arrangements with camp office in writing. But in a family emergency that arrangement can be made as needed.
* Release forms are done in writing before camp starts. This gives camp a list of persons allowed to pick-up the camper.

# EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Cell phones are carried by all deans. In every camp area, there are numbers posted for “on property assistance.” We are also on 911 system with EMS ten minutes away. If for some reason a phone is not available, a runner can be sent to medical station or dining hall for assistance.

**Contacting parents** should be done by camp director or his/her designated representative (this could be a volunteer staff or nurse). Camp administration should also talk with parent to clarify the camp’s role and responsibility.

**MEDIA**

The only person that may speak with media is the director. If any staff or volunteer is approached or contacted by the media, they are to refer them to the director and make no other comment.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

If you need to evacuate your campers to safe place, please follow these steps:

1. Get your campers from your cabin area to your parking lot.
2. Do a camper count for each cabin, making sure everyone is there.
3. Wait for instructions.
4. If you are instructed to get your campers to a safe building, they are as follows:
   1. Cabin area – Asbury Theatre
   2. KK Village – new chapel
   3. Village – Rec building
   4. Sports village – stay put
   5. Outpost – Commons
   6. Missions – stay put

Each camp should review these evacuation procedures at the start of camp, and each cabin should be aware of how to evacuate their individual cabin in case of emergency.