



Calm, Cool and Collected Campers

Presenter: Sheri Klugmann

Summary: In this session, we will focus on specific tools that camp staff can use to encourage campers to be their authentic selves, as well as support campers in managing stress and difficult emotions.

Session Length: 45 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Coloring Mandalas
- Sample Visuals
- Copies of Ramapo Handouts (if available)
- Blank Paper

Topic 1: Using strengths and interests to motivate and support self-management.

Pair/Share: What do you dislike and resist doing? What stresses you out?
What do you enjoy/ are you good at? How do those interests make you feel?

Say: It's the same for campers!

Application:

- What are activities or situations that may cause them stress? What are some interests or talents that our campers might have? What are some unusual or unexpected interests that our campers might have?
- How can we use these interests and activities to build campers up? To motivate them? To help them to feel safe during difficult moments?

Topic 2: Calming and mindfulness exercises to use at camp.

Lead participants in exercises:

- **Breathing Activities:** Deep belly breathing, sigh breathing, 123 I'm taking care of me, flower and candle, peace breath, gentle movement with breath.
- **Music mindfulness**
- **Drawing calming activities**

Application:

In small groups brainstorm:

- When would be good times of day where we can use these activities?
- How can we building them into transitions or downtime so that everyone becomes familiar with them-both camp wide and within individual bunks?
- How do we normalize these activities and make them part of the general camp culture?

Topic 3: Creating retreat or safe spaces.

Ask: How does it feel when we're somewhere and need to get away from people for a little while?

Say: When you're stressed or overwhelmed, what are 3 comforting items you'd want to have with you? What might campers want to have with them during these times?

Application:

- Where could our camp retreat space be?
- What materials might help campers soothe and reset?
- How would we teach campers to use it?

Topic 4: Using visuals to support and teach self-management and de-escalation.

Snowflake Activity

- Give participants a blank sheet of paper.
- Tell participants: fold your paper in half. Tear off the bottom right corner. Fold the paper in half again. Tear a slit in the middle. Turn your paper 180 degrees. Tear a small hole in the top corner etc. (Note: it doesn't matter what directions you give. What's important is that the directions are open to multiple interpretations. Do not provide a model or example. You may also choose not to repeat instructions or answer questions.)
- After 5-6 directions tell participants to open their papers and compare.

Ask: Why do our snowflakes look different?
If I wanted our snowflakes to look the same, what would I need to do differently?

Say: We can't just tell campers to relax or calm down. They may not know what that looks like! We need to model and use visuals to show them a menu of options.

Share examples of self-management visuals.

Application:

- What will your visual look like when you create one?
- Can we create camp-wide visuals for calming options so it becomes part of our camp culture?