

## Common MESH (Mental-Emotional-Social Health) Struggles - 101

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<b>SUMMARY:</b>	This workshop will provide you with a basic overview of the most common MESH issues facing children and adolescents so that you can be more prepared to provide support for all campers.
<b>TOPIC(S):</b>	Camper Care, Inclusion
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b>	1) What are some of the common MESH challenges that campers might be facing and how they may present in camp; and 2) How to equip counselors the tools support the MESH needs of our campers.
<b>AUDIENCE:</b>	Counselors
<b>TIMING:</b>	30-45 minutes
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	MESH 101 - Handout
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	MESH 101 – Handout
<b>SET-UP DETAILS:</b>	Set the chairs in a circle to facilitate group discussion and leave room for role play activities.



## **SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:**

- 1) Introduction to MESH in camp
- 2) Poll the staff about what they want to gain from this session
- 3) Children and Adolescents communicate through behavior – be mindful of symptoms
- 4) Common MESH Challenges in Camp (brief discussion of select topics)
  - Activity to introduce some of the concepts
    - Role play a scenario or read a vignette to help staff recognize and support a camper in need
  - Brief description of a particular challenge
  - Invite participants to offer examples of how their campers might demonstrate the behaviors associated with the specific challenges
- 5) How to support MESH needs:
  - Don't try to manage it alone
    - Consult with camp supervisors (division head, director, psychologist)
  - Do what works
    - If you have a camper that has been identified as needing support for MESH issues, camp administrators should communicate with parents and sometimes even campers themselves to find out what has helped them cope and feel supported
  - Lend an attentive and sensitive ear – listen and validate the emotional experience of your campers
  - Remember your role!
    - Counselors have tremendous power to be role models
    - Camp counselors are NOT therapists – if someone has a condition that is causing clinical impairment, they should be working with a professional.
- 6) (Optional) – If time permits, encourage staff to practice a few scenarios with each other
  - ID MESH needs of camper
  - Determine course of action
  - Practice being a support
  - Debrief what was noticed and what else could be done.
- 7) Time for Questions
- 8) Review: what have you learned & how will you use this information in camp?

## **ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:**

Make sure to design role play scenarios and customize both the handout and conversation to your specific age group and typical presentation.