

CAMPOEDIA RESOURCE

The Role of Camp in Gender Identity Exploration

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SUMMARY:	Participants in this workshop will receive the information necessary to advocate for gender affirming environments at camp, as well as practical recommendations for adapting camp activities to allow for gender identity expression. Participants will receive tools for discussing gender identity with campers and staff and will engage in interactive discussions to better understand how individual and community biases interfere with gender identity exploration at camp.
TOPIC(S):	Gender identity, camper care
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will be able to create gender affirming environments and understand the role summer camp can play in safe gender exploration.
AUDIENCE:	Camp staff at all levels.
TIMING:	45 minutes
APPENDICES:	Printout of PowerPoint slides.
MATERIALS NEEDED:	A/V for PowerPoint presentation.
SET-UP DETAILS:	Any space with closing doors so that examples and questions can be discussed privately.



SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

00:00-00:10 Introduction Discussion

- What is one message you received about gender while growing up from your parents/family?
 - Ex: “Boys will be boys.” “Girls like the color pink.”
- What is one message you received about gender while you were growing up from peers?
 - Ex: “Boys don’t cry.” “Men with many sexual partners are cool and women with many partners are ‘sluts.’”
- What is one message you received about gender from the media while you were growing up?
 - Ex: “Women are better at taking care of children.” “Men should be focused on their careers.”
- DISCUSS: What were common themes? What was challenging about answering some of these questions?
- SUMMARIZE: Gender is everywhere. These messages embody stereotypes ingrained in our society.

00:10-00:12 (slides 1 – 2)

- State the goals of the workshop and over view of agenda items.

00:12-00:25 (slides 3 – 8)

- Summarize components of gender.
- Emphasize importance of separating judgments about observable behaviors from statements of identity.
- Summarize age-typical development of gender identity.
- Ask participants about their reactions to identity development during early childhood.
- Reiterate that gender identity development is a process already in motion before campers arrive so, in order for camps to be developmentally appropriate, they must consider the development of gender.

00:25-00:30 (slides 9 – 11)

- Summarize evidence on the protective nature of gender affirming environments.

00:30-00:40 (slides 12 – 14)

- Define a gender affirming space.
- Discuss the importance of acknowledging how camp environments can reinforce or counter systems of oppression.
- Discuss the signs of gender affirming environments.
 - How do policies create gender affirming spaces?
 - What resources must be available?
 - How can camps be explicit about their intent to be gender affirming?

00:40-00:45 (slide 15)

- Questions and Discussion

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

- Have participants do the Gender Unicorn exercise on their own gender identity and expression.
- Use more time to discuss what messages your camp community has been sending about gender identity.
- Explore how to modify gendered spaces to be more inclusive and sensitive.