

Working with Young Campers (Part 1) *Specialty Track*

AUTHOR(S):	Asya Gribov
SUMMARY:	What are the super powers that can be unlocked in each counselor and in each camper? Thinking about - <i>Submitted by Asya Gribov</i>
TOPIC(S):	Young Children, Staff Training, Community Building, Historic Jewish Figures
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will get new and effective ideas to welcome new campers. Participants will gain tools to create a respectful bunk community.
AUDIENCE:	Staff, campers, small to medium size group, all ages
TIMING:	75-90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Children's Rights
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Pens, paper, post it boards, markers
SET-UP DETAILS:	AV set up for watching a video

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Ice Breaker: (10-15 minutes)

Participants stand in two lines facing each other with enough space for comfortable communication between partners and the others stand side by side. After allowing ample time for participants to answer the first question, ask 1 row to shift over so that everyone has a new partner. Repeat as necessary.

Question Prompts:

- What is your name and what camp are you from?
- What was your favorite toy or game as a child?
- What is a vivid memory you have of yourself as a camper? (Facilitator can share one own story)
- Did you have a childhood nickname? If so, what was it?
- Can you remember a time that you, as a child, were misunderstood by adults?
- What would you change about your childhood?

What Does it Take (20 minutes)

“Now turn your attention to the screen. We have a special message for you from the command center.”

Meet superhero Taylor Mali: What Do Teachers Make?

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5yg0u1MkDI>

“You were each selected to be here today, because you possess the qualities it takes to work with young campers. You might not be teachers in the narrow sense of the word, but you are educators, role models, and counselors, responsible for not only the safety of young children but also their development.”

Whole Group Discussion:

- You are not teachers, why did I make you watch this?
- What do you, as a counselor, make? – Put on post it and on board.
- What does it take to be you (a counselor working with younger kids)?
- What are the superpowers that you already possess?
- What are the superpowers you would like to acquire?
- What is your kryptonite? Who are your adversaries? Who is on your team?

The Rights of Children (45 minutes)

Discuss as a group:

- What are rights?
- Why do people need rights?
- What are your rights as a counselor?
- Was there a time your rights were compromised?

Definitions:

Rights - a moral or legal entitlement to have or obtain something or to act in a certain way.

Rights are legal, social, or ethical principles of freedom or entitlement; that is, rights are the fundamental normative rules about what is allowed of people or owed to people, according to some legal system, social convention, or ethical theory.

“He cannot be here with us today, for he made the ultimate sacrifice, but he left us with a legacy. Meet Superhero Janusz Kourchak”

[Janusz Kourchak](#) was a Polish-Jewish educator, children's author, and pediatrician known as Pan Doktor ("Mr. Doctor") or Stary Doktor ("Old Doctor"). After spending many years working as director of an orphanage in Warsaw, he refused freedom and stayed with his orphans when the institution was sent from the Ghetto to the Treblinka extermination camp, during the Grossaktion Warsaw of 1942.

Participants read the Rights of Children by Janusz Kourchak (The Rights of Children -Handout)

Discussion in small groups:

- Are there any other rights you would like to add?
- Are there any rights you disagree with?
- Is there anything surprising?
- Why do kids need rights – why are adult rights not enough?
- What rights are just for kids/ that adults might not need?

What are the rights of campers?

Participants will work in small groups to write up the rights of their campers on large posters.

After completion, participants will walk around and add post-its/ pledges with concrete ideas of what they can do to ensure these rights are being protected.

Additional Conversation Questions:

- How can you identify if someone's right is being infringed upon?
- Should some people in the bunk not have these rights?
- How do you mediate between the individual right and the right of the group?
- What is the difference between rights and rules? How does this compare to what you had been doing previously?
- What is the difference between saying 'do not hit someone' and working to ensure other people's safety?
- What is the difference between 'dumbing down' things and explaining them with developmentally appropriate concepts?
- How can this topic be the platform for greater conversations?
- How do we use human rights as a frame of reference in our relationships with others?