

LUNCH N' LEARN RESOURCE GUIDES

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The following resource guide contains 3 lunch n' learn guides for camp staff. They can be used together as a series, or as individual guides for discussions.

Feel free to use all 3, or just 1, and edit to best suit your camp's needs.

THIS RESOURCE CONTAINS GUIDES ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Lunch n' Learn for 1st year staff (pg. 2-3)
- Managing Stress and Self- Care (pg. 4-6)
- Signs, Symptoms, and De-escalation (pg. 7-14)

LUNCH & LEARN

FIRST YEAR STAFF

GOALS:

- To create a space for first time staff members to debrief their first weeks as counselors
- To help first year staff increase their self-confidence in their abilities

SUPPLIES:

slips of paper, something to put paper in, 1 sheet of paper per staff member, writing utensils

OPENING ACTIVITY:

Check-in (approx.: 5-10 minutes depending on time available)

- Go around the table and check-in since the first week or so of having campers for the first time can be overwhelming
 - Staff can either share out or write how they're feeling on a slip of paper and submit it anonymously to whoever is leading the session
 - If they feel like they need a one on one or check-in, have them write that as well so the supervisor or member of head staff leading the lunch and learn knows to find a time to have someone check-in privately with them later
 - Could be used as a time to discuss self-care techniques they could use or that they've been trying and have found helpful, (Ex: meditation apps, journaling, talking to friends and family outside of camp at night, etc.)

MAIN ACTIVITY:

Workshopping (approx.: 30-40 minutes)

- Have staff members write down a challenge they faced in the past couple of weeks and submit it anonymously to whoever is leading the session
 - Challenges should be something they weren't sure how to approach, weren't expecting, or didn't feel fully prepared for
 - Ideally would be camper related but could also be about co-staff
- Have staff brainstorm multiple ways to approach and handle that situation, and give explanations for their potential solutions, then have them give each other feedback
 - (Maybe other staff have experienced the same thing and found a way that was successful, let them use each other as resources)
- Debrief each solution with leader of the session, what did they come up with that would work well, and what are places for growth or options they may not have thought of

(The activity could be a discussion and/or a role playing the scenarios submitted so they get a hands on feel)

CLOSING ACTIVITY:

Letter Writing (approx.: 10 minutes)

- Have staff write a reflective letter to themselves for the end of the summer
 - Ex. prompts to use
 - ◆ How does it feel to be a staff member and be in a cabin creating the camp experience for their kids?
 - ◆ What's their favorite part of being a staff member?
 - What was unexpected about being a staff member?
 - What have they learned so far?
 - How do they want to grow/what do they want to accomplish over the summer?
 - What do they want to come away from the summer with?
 - What do they want their kids to come away from the summer with?
 - Best memory of the summer so far?
 - A wish for their future selves (camp or otherwise)?

Whoever is leading the lunch and learn can hold on to these letters and return them to the staff at the beginning of a new session or at the end of the summer.

THINGS TO DISCUSS:

(if applicable/they come up)

- Letting things go/When to intervene based on camp policies and procedures
 - Have a conversation about when staff should step in and when it's ok to let kids figure things out themselves. Staff don't need to feel as though they have to solve everything and every problem. Talk about how the beauty of camp is kids having the safe space to figure things out by themselves and learning to be independent.
- How to approach a situation:
 - Are you prepared to listen without expression?
 - ◆ Talk about what it means to listen non-judgmentally
 - Respecting individual experience

- Not making biased assumptions
 - Maintain neutrality
 - Be mindful of language and expression
 - Ask questions for clarity
- Are you the right person to help this child?
 - ◆ Different kids have different relationships with different staff and might respond better to a co-counselor in the moment. It's not a reflection on the ability of the staff member.
- Are you able to give enough time to this child in this moment?
 - ◆ If not, it's ok to say something like "I want to talk about this with you but I can't right now. Can we talk at _____?" (choose a time to talk that you can stick to)
- Address that they may not have answers to all the questions all the time and that's ok. If they feel like they need to jump in they should always feel empowered to use their best judgement and support their campers as best as possible.
- How to manage situations that bring up strong emotions for the staff member
 - Tapping out with co-staff
 - Taking time to process and do some form of self-care when feeling overwhelmed
 - Checking in with supervisor
 - Anything else that can help staff stay calm and grounded in moment (i.e.: focusing on breath, reminding yourself that the camper needs you to stay calm, etc.)
- How to make a child feel more comfortable when having a potentially uncomfortable conversation
 - Take a walk
 - Play cards
 - Let them play with fidgets
 - Making bracelets or lanyard
 - Coloring
 - Anything else that staff or session leader thinks of
- Terminology & Reframing situations
 - Eliminating "bad/hard/challenging/etc. camper" language
 - Behavior is a form of communication-seemingly negative behaviors are communicating unmet needs, having an open conversation with the camper can help you figure out what those are and how to help them

MANAGING STRESS AND SELF-CARE LUNCH AND LEARN

AUTHOR: BEN SHOVERS

SUMMARY:

Staff members will learn and share multiple ways to provide self-care and how to manage their stress while at camp.

TOPIC(S):

Self-care and managing stress

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Staff members will learn how to reduce stress and burnout by learning multiple self-care strategies, and they will have a relaxing break from being a counselor/with their campers all day as they will spend lunch with only fellow staff members.

AUDIENCE:

Target age: mainly counselors and unit leaders, but can easily accommodate specialists

Group size: as many staff that are interested and can safely be away from their campers

TIMING:

Can be adapted to however long lunch takes at different camps, but designed for about 45 minutes

APPENDICES:

Can print out a list of self-care/stress management techniques, but not necessary

MATERIALS NEEDED:

No materials are totally necessary, but some materials that may be useful are:

- a white board/very large pad of paper
- dry erase pens/markers
- pens/pencils
- paper for notetaking by participants
- tables/chairs for people eating
- microphone for presenters

SET-UP DETAILS:

Can occur almost anywhere that it is convenient for the camp, but easiest in a quiet setting

SESSION TIMELINE:

Wait for people to come: 1-5 minutes

Explain what stress is and why it needs to be managed: 5-8 minutes

Explain what self-care is and why it is so necessary: 5-8 minutes

Share potential self-care strategies: 8-15 minutes

Have participants share other strategies: 8-15 minutes

Review what people have learned: 5-10 minutes

OUTLINE

Explain what stress is and why it needs to be managed:

- ❑ “A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances. (Oxford Dictionary)”
- ❑ List different stress inducing situations at camp (homesickness, campers not listening, campers skipping activities, people forgetting to plan a program until 20 minutes before they need to run it, etc.)
- ❑ Explain that stress does not allow individuals to process information or think critically without coping strategies

Explain what self-care is and why it is so necessary:

- ❑ “The practice of taking an active role in protecting one’s own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress (Oxford Dictionary)”
- ❑ Explain that self-care is what allows counselors to continue doing their job at a high level
- ❑ Without self-care, people burn out
- ❑ People cannot help others when they do not have the energy or desire to help themselves
- ❑ In order to provide care to campers or other staff members, staff have to make sure they are in an appropriate headspace and capable of taking on other people’s problems

Share potential self-care strategies:

- ❑ Box breathing (4 deep breathes – 4 seconds in through nose, 4 seconds holding the breath, 4 seconds breathing out through mouth, 4 seconds relaxing) takes 64 seconds
- ❑ Stretch
- ❑ Go for a walk/run/ move your body
- ❑ Get fresh air
- ❑ Gratitude journal (write 3 things every day that you have gratitude for – leads to optimistic and more positive view of oneself and others)
- ❑ Meditate
- ❑ Write down what you are thinking (whether it be positive, negative, optimistic, pessimistic, hopeful, or nervous, write down your feelings)
- ❑ Create something (can be anything – drawing a picture, painting, writing a poem or song lyric, cook, bake – as long you are creating something that did not exist before)
- ❑ Text a friend (whether it be just checking in, seeing how someone’s day is going, asking someone how

they are doing, it makes you feel good about yourself for asking and it will make your friend feel happy to know that you are thinking about them)

- Teach something (can be anything – a fun fact, a weird trivia question, a new skill, etc. – it can be funny or serious)
- Set a goal (make sure it is specific, but write it down and tell someone about it so that they can keep you accountable)

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

This program does not need to happen only at camp, it can easily be done (multiple times) throughout the school year. This should be simple and mostly informal. The goals are to give staff members a break from being with their campers, allow staff members to be with other “adults”, and teach staff members healthy ways to cope with their stress that can be used inside and outside of camp.

SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, & DE-ESCALATION LUNCH AND LEARN

AUTHOR: IZZY NAMATH

SUMMARY:	This program covers signs and symptoms of common mental health issues, and discusses de-escalation techniques. -Submitted by Izzy Namath
TOPIC(S):	Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Issues, De-escalation Techniques
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Staff will feel more confident in their ability to recognize signs of a mental health issue and in their ability to de-escalate a crisis situation
AUDIENCE:	Staff, ages 18-22
TIMING:	50 minutes
APPENDICES:	Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, Appendix D, Appendix E
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Copies of the Appendices for whomever is leading the program
SET-UP DETAILS:	Anywhere that staff can discuss while also eating a meal

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

INTRODUCTION 00:00-00:08

Have everyone introduce themselves (name, year at camp, what age group they work with)

Discuss the difference between mental health and mental illness as well as how mental well-being is related to different Jewish values (see Appendices A and B)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS 00:08-00:18

Ask staff to name some signs and symptoms of mental health challenges they've seen in campers (see Appendix C for examples)

DE-ESCALATION 00:18-00:38

Explain to staff some de-escalation techniques

Have staff practice these techniques by doing two large group role plays (or more if time allows) (see Appendix D)

RESILIENCY BUILDING 00:38-00:45

Explain to staff what resiliency is and provide them with some techniques to build resiliency for themselves and their campers. (see Appendix E)

WRAP UP 00:45-00:50

Have everyone share one thing they are taking away from this lunch and learn. Also, have each staff member pair up with another staff member who they will later check in with about how implementing these skills has gone for them. Thank everyone for participating.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

When discussing, ask staff to share what their ideas and opinions are rather than lecturing.

To make this longer, have staff do more role plays, or have staff do role plays in small groups and have the groups share in the larger group what worked well and what did not work well in the role play. Staff can role play issues they have faced with campers/situations they are currently facing with campers.

APPENDIX A

Here are some important points to include when discussing the difference between mental health and mental illness

- Mental health exists on a continuum
 - Everyone has mental health issues because we all have mental health
- We can have traits of disorders without meeting the formal diagnostic criteria.
- You can have good Mental Health but struggle in a certain aspect of your life
- On the flip side, you can have debilitating Mental Health issues and have very functional aspects of your life
- Depending on the day, the situation, or a host of other factors, we might move up and down the continuum of mental health.
- We all possess some mental health challenges at some point.
 - What differs person-to-person is only the degree, frequency, or severity of these issues
- Mental health issues are as common as and perhaps more so than physical health issues

APPENDIX B

Here are the different Jewish values that can be associated with Mental Health (this list is non-exhaustive, people can share things that are not part of this list) from thebluedovefoundation.org

Ask staff what Jewish values they can think of that relate to mental health, and then if they get stuck, offer them to read an example off of this list.

- B'tzelem Elohim: Created in the Divine Image
 - All of humanity should be afforded dignity and respect, and showing these values to those experiencing mental illness and/or addiction can counter the shame and stigma that exists.
- Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeh: All Jews are Responsible for One Another
 - We are interconnected and must be invested in the mental wellness and overall well-being of everyone. We must be willing, informed, and prepared to help one another, because we all benefit.
- Refuah Shleimah: Healing and Wholeness
 - Judaism has a long tradition of recognizing that healing is not just physical; it is holistic, which is to say it has physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual components that are all interconnected. The Jewish tradition also emphasizes healing rather than curing. Even when mental illness is under control, healing and a return to wholeness is in order. We see healing as a process that has many components and may be a lifelong journey.
- Chesed u'Gevurah: Balancing Lovingkindness and Discernment
 - Too often we diagnose someone or think we know what might “fix” a situation, but when it comes to mental wellness, we must come from a place of listening and openness. We don't want to make anyone feel like they are defined by their illness or struggle. There are times when judgment, discernment, limitations, and boundaries are essential - our skills and support come with very clear limitations.
- Pikuach Nefesh: Saving a Life
 - In Jewish law, there is no greater priority than saving a life. This leads to the idea that Jewish mitzvot, or commandments, are not about restricting life but rather about enabling us to live our most meaningful lives and helping others do the same. Are we life affirming to ourselves and others? Are we acting in ways that celebrate the divine-spark (B'tzelem Elohim) in others?
- Nosay V'ol Im Chavayro: Sharing a Burden with One's Friend
 - The Tanakh includes a story of a special friendship between Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi. Together, Ruth and Naomi face many difficulties but are able to overcome them, because they support each other, exemplifying the middah nosay b'ol im chavayro.
- Lifnei Iver: Before the Blind (Inclusivity)
 - It is our responsibility to do our best to create a community that meets the needs and celebrates the value of everyone. Rather than looking at a disability or mental illness through the lens of handicaps, we can uphold this value by seeking to ensure all individuals are fully able to participate in the community.
- Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World
 - Tikkun olam refers to the Jewish value of repairing the world or making the world whole again through acts of social change. Jewish thought has taken this idea a step further with tikkun hanefesh, repairing the soul. The work of repairing the world begins with repairing the soul. Before we are responsible to others, we are responsible for ourselves.

APPENDIX C

Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Issues

- Fidgeting
- Pacing
- Rocking
- Hand wringing
- Withdrawal
- Extra talkative

Ask the staff “what are some red flags we might see at camp?” Explain that a red flag does not mean it will necessarily turn into a crisis, but red flags are important to be aware of and to address promptly so they do not develop into a crisis. Explain to staff when it would be appropriate to reach out to camper care/social workers or unit leadership.

Here is a general list, but ask staff to describe what some of these general categories may look like more specifically in campers’ actions

- Mood/behavior changes
- Self-injury/poor coping
- Risky behavior, suicidal ideation
- Isolation
- Drop in functioning (Deteriorating performance, quitting activities, sporadic attendance, repeated requests for special consideration)
- Difficulty processing and expressing thoughts
- Sleep or appetite changes
- Anxiety symptoms
 - Physical: panic attacks, hot and cold flashes, racing heart, tightening of the chest, quick breathing, restlessness, or feeling tense, wound up, and edgy
 - Psychological: excessive fear, worry, catastrophizing, or obsessive thinking
 - Behavioral: avoidance of situations that make you feel anxious
- Disruptive behavior
- Depression symptoms
 - Behavior: not going out anymore, not getting things done, withdrawing from close friends, not doing activities they usually enjoy, difficulty concentrating
 - Feelings: overwhelmed, guilty, irritable, frustrated, lacking in confidence, unhappy, indecisive, disappointed, miserable, sad
 - Thoughts: ‘I’m a failure.’ ‘Everything is my fault.’ ‘Nothing good ever happens to me.’ ‘I’m worthless.’ ‘Life’s not worth living.’ ‘People would be better off without me.’
 - Physical: exhaustion, sick, headaches and muscle pains, upset stomach, issues sleeping, change in appetite, significant weight loss or gain

APPENDIX D

Share with staff that de-escalation techniques are important so that a situation does not become unmanageable and there are steps staff can take when they notice a sign of someone struggling with their mental health.

Ask staff to share some de-escalation techniques they have used that have worked

Share other techniques that they may not have thought of

DE-ESCALATING THE SITUATION

- Speak slowly and confidently with a gentle, caring tone
- Do not argue
- Do not threaten
- Do not raise your voice or speak quickly
- Use positive words
- Stay calm
- Do not restrict youth's movement
- Try to be aware of what may increase camper's fear and aggression
- Pause if needed during the situation
- Keep at least your eyes on the youth at all times
- Practice active listening
 - Pay attention (allow camper to finish their sentences, think of a response only after your camper is done with what they are saying)
 - Withhold judgment
 - Reflecting (paraphrase what your camper has said to make sure you understand what they are saying)
 - Clarifying (ask questions if you are confused about what your camper is saying)
 - Summarizing (restate key themes of the conversation at the end of the conversation)
- If needed, distract the camper, wait for them to calm down before engaging again
- Allow for personal space
- Ask for permission before giving comforting touch
- Keep eye contact
- Relaxed body language
- Reinforce positive things your camper has done or said

Here are some role plays to practice with the staff. Have one staff member be the camper and another be the counselor. At the end of the role play, have the other staff members share what they felt the staff member who played the counselor did that was effective and what could be improved upon. If time allows, split staff into two groups to practice role plays in a smaller setting and then share back to the large group what they found effective and ineffective.

ROLE PLAYS

SITUATION A A camper is distressed after some campers are playing cards without them during bunk time, and they do not want to talk to anyone. The camper used to be best friends with those campers, but

feels as though they are growing apart and is worried about their friendships. The camper is sitting on their bed, and glancing over at the other campers every so often. They ignore anyone who is trying to speak to them.

SITUATION B You notice that your camper has stopped eating regularly at meals. The camper says they just do not like the options that camp has provided. You notice that they also have not been participating in athletics which they normally love.

SITUATION C Two campers are yelling at one another after a game of gaga. They each claim they got the other one “out” and camper A is crying and calling camper B a cheater. Camper A says they never win anything at camp and they say it is because everyone else is always cheating. Later camper A is put on the same team as camper B for an evening program activity. Camper A starts screaming and says they refuse to be on the same team as camper B.

SITUATION D Camper C knows that camper D is considered to be a “troublemaker” and is angry that camper D got an extra piece of dessert and they did not. During song session, camper C routinely bumps into camper D and tries to provoke camper D. Camper D yells at camper C and asks them “what their problem is.” Camper D starts throwing whatever they can find near them and camper C runs away crying.

APPENDIX E

Resiliency is our ability to bounce back from a situation, and can help strengthen mental health.

These are techniques to build resiliency that you could add into your night time ritual or bunk time. These are also techniques that you can build into your daily life to build your own resiliency.

THE 10 MINUTE 10 STEP RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKOUT!

One: Deep Breathing (4 x 4 - 4 in, 4 hold, 4 out, 4 relax, repeat 4 times)

Two: Stretch

Three: Move your body (gets your blood flowing, heart rate up)

Four: Get fresh air

Five: Gratitude Journal (write as many things you are thankful for today as you can think of in a certain amount of time)

Six: Meditate

Seven: Write it down! Your feelings that is...

Eight: Create!

Nine: Message a friend (give campers time to talk to their bunkmates or write a letter to someone)

Ten: Teach someone something

Bonus: Set a goal (something you want to achieve in the next week that will give you an additional sense of purpose and help you feel accomplished!)