



Camp Northland **Pocket Guide**



Introduction to Character & Activities to Build Strength

By: Shayne Wolle

A large, faint, purple watermark of the Camp Northland logo is centered in the background. The logo is circular with a sunburst design. The word "NORTHLAND" is arched across the top, and "ESTABLISHED 1909" is arched across the bottom. In the center of the sunburst is a silhouette of a person in a canoe.

Welcome to Camp Northland!

Camp Northland is more than a summer camp. It is a community where campers, staff, and families come together to learn, grow, and celebrate life. This handbook is designed for everyone; campers, staff, and all personnel, to guide us in creating a safe, welcoming, and character-driven camp experience.



Camp Northland's Five Core Values

Safety



Providing a safe and healthy environment for all campers and staff is paramount to our mission.

Pluralism



We are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for all members of our camp community.

Jewish Identity



We focus on building Jewish identity and fostering appreciation for Jewish heritage and a positive connection to Israel.

Valuable Life Skills



We aim to help campers develop confidence, resilience, independence, and life skills through their experiences at camp.

Family & Community



We strive to create strong, lasting connections and nurture a sense of family and community among all members of our camp.



Character at Camp Northland

Character strengths are positive qualities in our thoughts, feelings, and actions that support integrity, growth, and well-being. At Camp Northland, we see character as the daily practice of kindness, respect, responsibility, resilience, and creativity, all aligned with our Five Core Values.

The Role of Everyone at Camp

Role Models: Campers and staff alike are role models. By choosing kindness, fairness, and responsibility, we strengthen our community.

Attitude: Enthusiasm, flexibility, and positivity create a welcoming atmosphere.

Behaviours: Narrating strengths out loud (e.g., “That was great teamwork!”) reinforces learning and builds awareness.



Daily Opportunities for Character Building

Community:

Encourage inclusion, belonging, and friendship.

Autonomy:

Offer choice and voice, giving campers space to problem-solve.

Mastery:

Provide meaningful challenges and chances to practice.

Purpose:

Connect actions to something larger, serving others and building community

Camp Northland Character Programs



Secret Football

Character Strengths: Gratitude, Joy, Connection

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Valuable Life Skills

Social-Emotional Skills: Self-awareness, Relationship skills, Reflection

Materials: Football or any tossable object

Description: Campers sit in a circle. A staff member starts by holding the football, sharing something they are thankful for, and tossing it to another camper. That camper shares their gratitude before passing it along. Continue until everyone has shared. Add rounds with prompts such as “something you’re excited to try at camp” or “someone who makes you happy.”

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to share something positive?
- Did hearing others make you feel more connected?
- How does gratitude strengthen our community?



Karaoke Lost and Found

Character Strengths: Kindness, Service, Joy

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Jewish Identity (mitzvah)

Social-Emotional Skills: Relationship skills, Empathy

Materials: Lost and found items, music source (optional)

Description: Cabins collect lost and found items and deliver them while singing songs. It turns returning belongings into a joyful mitzvah.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to return belongings?
- Why is helping others important?
- How did singing change the experience?



Camp Northland Character Programs



Kindness Clothes Pins

Character Strengths: Kindness, Creativity, Encouragement

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Valuable Life Skills

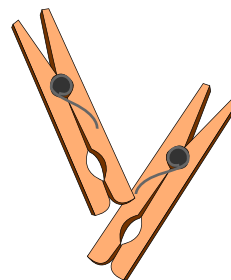
Social-Emotional Skills: Social awareness, Relationship skills

Materials: Clothing pins, markers

Description: Campers decorate pins with kind words or messages and pin them to others' clothing or bags.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to give or receive a pin?
- Why do small acts matter?
- How can kindness spread beyond this activity?



Funky Freestyle

Character Strengths: Creativity, Confidence, Teamwork

Northland Core Value Connection: Valuable Life Skills, Family & Community

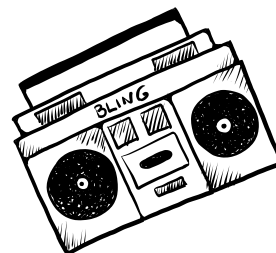
Social-Emotional Skills: Self-expression, Collaboration

Materials: Music track or beat (optional)

Description: Cabins collaborate to make freestyle raps or songs. Each must include at least one compliment about someone at camp.

Reflection Questions:

- How did your group work together?
- What was fun about including compliments?
- How did creativity strengthen your group?



Camp Northland Character Programs



Gratitude Notes

Character Strengths: Gratitude, Generosity, Joy

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Valuable Life Skills

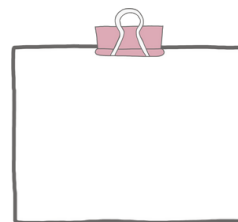
Social-Emotional Skills: Empathy, Self-awareness

Materials: Paper, pens, decorations

Description: Campers write personalized gratitude notes for others and deliver them as surprises.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to write and share notes?
- What impact can words have?
- How can we practice gratitude beyond camp?



Mirror Positivity

Character Strengths: Optimism, Kindness, Creativity

Northland Core Value Connection: Safety, Family & Community

Social-Emotional Skills: Social awareness, Self-expression

Materials: Washable markers, mirrors

Description: Cabins write positive affirmations or drawings on camp mirrors for others to see.

Reflection Questions:

- How do positive words affect self-image?
- How might messages brighten others' days?
- What other ways can we share positivity?



Camp Northland Character Programs



Gratitude Scavenger Hunt

Character Strengths: Gratitude, Curiosity, Joy

Northland Core Value Connection: Valuable Life Skills, Family & Community

Social-Emotional Skills: Self-awareness, Reflection

Materials: Paper, pens

Description: Campers search camp for gratitude items: nature, people, places, or memories. Groups share their discoveries afterward.

Reflection Questions:

- Which discovery stood out?
- How did gratitude change your view?
- How can gratitude strengthen our community?



Camp Cheer Remix

Character Strengths: Creativity, Joy, Teamwork

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Valuable Life Skills

Social-Emotional Skills: Collaboration, Self-expression

Materials: None

Description: Cabins remix existing camp cheers with new words highlighting values, gratitude, or humor. Perform them for others.

Reflection Questions:

- How did your group collaborate?
- What message did your cheer share?
- How can creativity strengthen community?



Camp Northland Character Programs



The Web of Connection

Character Strengths: Connection, Gratitude, Teamwork

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Safety

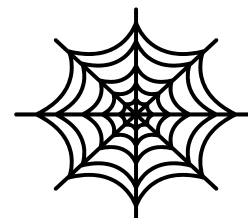
Social-Emotional Skills: Relationship skills, Empathy

Materials: Ball of yarn or string

Description: Campers form a circle, tossing yarn while sharing appreciation, until a web forms. The web symbolizes how everyone is connected.

Reflection Questions:

- What did you notice as the web grew?
- How does the web represent our community?
- How can we ensure no one is left out?



Camp Compliment Wall

Character Strengths: Kindness, Gratitude, Encouragement

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Valuable Life Skills

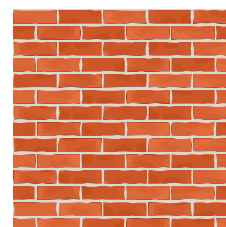
Social-Emotional Skills: Social awareness, Empathy

Materials: Poster or bulletin, sticky notes, markers

Description: A public wall where campers post compliments or gratitude notes for others.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to read compliments?
- What role does encouragement play?
- How can positivity move from the wall to daily life?



Camp Northland Character Programs



Silent Line-Up Challenge

Character Strengths: Teamwork, Problem-Solving, Patience

Northland Core Value Connection: Valuable Life Skills, Safety

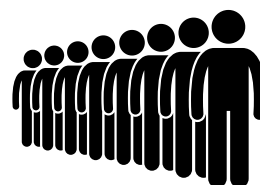
Social-Emotional Skills: Communication, Collaboration

Materials: None

Description: Without speaking, campers must line up in a given order (birthday, height, etc.) using only gestures.

Reflection Questions:

- What strategies worked best?
- How did nonverbal communication feel?
- How does this activity apply to camp teamwork?



Pass the Pulse

Character Strengths: Connection, Unity, Joy

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Safety

Social-Emotional Skills: Awareness, Focus, Cooperation

Materials: None

Description: Campers stand in a circle holding hands, passing a hand squeeze as fast as possible. Try to beat the time or add multiple pulses.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to pass and receive the pulse?
- What helped the group succeed?
- How does this reflect teamwork at camp?



Camp Northland Character Programs



Story Chain

Character Strengths: Creativity, Humor, Kindness

Northland Core Value Connection: Family & Community, Pluralism

Social-Emotional Skills: Collaboration, Self-expression

Materials: None

Description: Campers sit in a circle and create a shared story, adding one sentence each. Every sentence must highlight a compliment, strength, or value.

Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to hear strengths about yourself?
- What role did humour play in connection?
- How can we tell positive stories daily?





Reflection Prompts for Camp Life

Use these prompts daily with individuals or groups to strengthen reflection and connection:

1. Self-Awareness:

What is something you're proud of today?

2. Emotional Awareness:

What emotion did you feel most today, and what caused it?

3. Conflict & Empathy:

Was there a disagreement today? How did you handle it?

4. Social Skills:

How did you include someone who might have been left out?

5. Responsibility:

Did you take responsibility for something important today?

6. Growth:

What's a goal you want to set for tomorrow?

The background of the page features a large, faint, purple circular logo for Camp Northland. The logo contains a silhouette of a mountain range and a sun. The words "CAMP NORTHLAND" are arched across the top, and "ESTABLISHED 1909" is arched across the bottom. A small star is positioned to the right of the mountain range.

Living the Northland Way

This handbook is more than a guide; it is an invitation. By living Camp Northland's Five Core Values every day, we create a camp that is safe, inclusive, meaningful, skill-building, and filled with the spirit of family and community. Together, we build a place where every camper belongs.

Onward, Northland.