



Youth Protection Standards

Camp Fire Alaska has expansive youth protection policies, procedures, and practices which are reviewed and updated annually.

Camp Fire Alaska's policies are informed by guidance from Camp Fire National's child abuse protocols that were developed in consultation with third party experts from Praesidium, a leader in preventing abuse for over 30 years. Learn more about Praesidium [here](#).

Definitions of Abuse

While definitions of abuse vary, for purposes of this document, we broadly define the following:

- Physical abuse is injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a youth.
- Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a youth and an adult or between two youth. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or the other youth.
- Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the youth's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
- Neglect is the failure to provide for a youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a youth from harm.

Hiring & Screening

Camp Fire Alaska's comprehensive hiring process includes:

- All candidates complete an application.
- Interviews are conducted by trained leadership staff.
- References are obtained for each applicant including a previous supervisor
- Prior to access to youth, all hires undergo a criminal background check
- National Sex Offender Registry Check
- All staff sign a statement indicating they have read and agree to comply with all organizational policies.

On-going screening & monitoring:

- Repeat criminal background checks occur every 2.5 years for all employees
- All staff are required to complete an annual self-disclosure form
- Staff are required to immediately notify supervisor and/or Human Resources if they are arrested or convicted of a crime while they are employed
- Staff are prohibited from accessing, displaying, producing, possessing, or distributing inappropriate information or pornography on council's property or equipment

Youth Protection Standards

Camp Fire Alaska provides training for all employees on the following youth protection standards:

- Appropriate and inappropriate interactions between adults and youth
 - Physical contact
 - Verbal interactions
 - Limiting one-on-one interactions & procedures for managing one-one interactions when necessary for health and safety reasons
 - Gift giving/acceptance
 - Electronic communications & social media
 - Interaction outside of Camp Fire programs

- Appropriate and inappropriate interactions between youth and youth
 - Physical contact
 - Verbal interactions
 - Limiting one-on-one interactions
- Responding to youth to youth sexual activity
- Mandatory child abuse and exploitation reporting
- Responding to allegations and/or incidents of abuse
- Reporting of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations
- Youth supervision procedures
 - Adult-to-youth ratios & grouping
 - Bathroom/changing
 - Injuries and illness
 - Field trips
 - Youth release to approved contacts
- Guiding youth behavior using positive youth development discipline methods

Reporting & Response

Camp Fire Alaska policies dictate a thorough response when made aware of information involving the health and safety of participants and staff in our programs. Responses include compliance with and reporting to all regulatory agencies and authorities.

If you have any concerns about youth safety in Camp Fire program, please reach out to Jenny Stucky, Chief Operations Officer at 907-257-8875 or jstucky@campfireak.org.

Please see the following page for a list of appropriate and inappropriate interactions and boundaries between staff and youth.

Appropriate and inappropriate boundaries between staff and youth

Camp Fire’s standards for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions include but are not limited to:

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i>
<p>Contact initiated by the youth such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated areas or while one-on-one • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing a youth to cling to an employee’s leg • Allowing youth to sit on an employee’s lap • Any type of massage given by or to a youth outside of accepted and documented medical treatment • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or the employee • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas that is outside authorized and documented personal care assistance

Camp Fire’s standards for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions include but are not limited to:

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise • Strength-based conversations • Self-disclosure as a supervised therapeutic tool by licensed clinicians, medical professionals, and pastoral counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of employees • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming, belittling • Oversharing personal history • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth • Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family • Compliments relating to physique or body development