

QUESTION: What are the 3-5 “Hot Topics” impacting camps and youth in your area/region?

Public Policy

- J-1 Visa Foreign exchange: (Virginias)
 - State legislation that would add more barriers/problem
- Not allowing employers to get access to criminal backgrounds
- Politics in Camp
- In this political atmosphere, conversations have been and can lead to divisive outcomes
- Water rights. Lack of water – western states
- Public policy/legislation/advocacy/data collection/etc. – especially on state level – we don’t do it well – economic impacts of camp to bring attention to camping issues for state legislators (Wisconsin)

Camp Staffing

- Hiring Staff
 - Available domestic workforce is striking – Concern to fill positions
 - As minimum wage increases its get more difficult to fill positions
 - How do we convince colleagues, universities and higher learning organizations to partner with ACA to get students involved in camp?
 - Parents of international staff not wanting to send their kid to J-1 Camp Counselor program, because of the political climate
 - How do we begin to look at tuition/price to attend camp as it relates to covering labor cost?
- Jobs – difficulty recruiting camp staff
- Employment Laws - Wage and Hour – minimum wage. Also concerns about hours
- Generation Z – not wanting to work as many hours (work/life balance)
 - Framing the opportunity
 - Show that we value and care about the staff
 - Involve young people in that conversation
 - Challenge working with year-round employees – can’t qualify year round staff as seasonal staff
- Cyber bullying – staff firing
- Staff Recruitment – a constant; need to be more aware of new technology and channels for recruitment; Especially male quality staff are hard to find (Wisconsin; Texoma; Oregon Trail)

Education

- Security issue w/ Marijuana
 - With the legalization of marijuana more people are beginning to grow marijuana
 - Growers are growing near camp lands, which could cause security issues if not managed correctly.
 - Medical marijuana – Request use in camp by campers/ staff

- How to keep immigrant populations engaged in camping
 - How to deal with political conversations?
 - How to keep them from hiding?
- Sanctuary Camps: Having plans in place to help lead a kid to services that can help, if the child's parent is deported.
- #Metoo - Specific camp education for sexual harassment prevention
- Laws camps need to know around Security cameras & audio recording at camp – camps need to know about the laws around recording sound. (Pennsylvania)
- Need to encourage camps to start farm to table (CH)
 - Education about farm to table / FDA rules apply /Little O vs. Big O (organic)
- Technology - Cell phones – staff using their phones
- Camper trends?
- Disaster preparedness – natural disasters, active shooters, etc. – camps serving as disaster relief shelters/etc./serving as part of disaster task forces organized in advance – insurance planning – best practices when you are impacted – emotional preparedness – impacts on personal/local/regional/state/national infrastructure – education around resources available for disaster relief (Texoma)
- LGBTQ issues – especially transgender issues – campers/counselors/everyone and communication with parents/families around these issues (Texoma)
- Racial tensions at camp (Ohio)
- Behavior challenges at camp and counselors' inability to manage challenging behavior (Ohio)
- Heroin epidemic – are we serving the families we need to be serving – should we be reaching out more to families who have been suffering because of heroin? (Ohio)
- Vouchers for childcare sending kids to camp – ACA Accredited camps can receive childcare vouchers and they are adding some additional requirements on top of that now – as a result, other new entities wanting to start as camps to make use of this funding but people not knowing where to start/how to develop programs (Ohio)
- Growing adult programs in the “shoulder season” (Northeast)
- Violence and Active Shooter:
 - Making your camp site safe – important! Need to be able to talk about active shooter drills with parents.
 - Riflery questions from parents after the Florida shooting

Membership

- How do we connect with camps that are not aware of ACA? (SW)
 - Don't always know who those camps are
 - Thousands of programs not regulated – use the word summer camp – liability (UNY)
- Would like more activities/opportunities for membership (Virginias)
- Camps/Programs, especially agency camps, seem to have a lot of turnover of leadership which makes it more difficult for them to continue as effectively offering their programs and services – where can ACA better support them?; In Texas Medicaid waiver will pay for people with special needs to attend camp under “out-of-home respite care,” but requires ACA Accreditation (and state licensure) (Ohio; Texoma)

- Specialized camps (like “Soccer Camp,” “Baseball Camp,” etc.) that are not required to be licensed/regulated – taking away from more traditional camp settings – Camps on Campus is growing because they are starting realize more that they need what the camping industry does; some competition for campers and staff is because of year-round sports (Northeast; Oregon Trail)

Diversity & Inclusion

- As an industry not serving the growing minority population
 - How do we go to those families that don’t know about camp
 - How do we build those relationships with family
 - When culture doesn’t include camps
- #Metoo - Specific camp education for sexual harassment prevention

MESH

- Increasing cutting, suicidal, increased depression, etc. – how do you support campers and staff?
 - Need to support families
- Mental First Aid
- Social work support is important in camp – point person in camps, may support the overall mental health of the camp and train frontline staff
- Professional development opportunity – MESH
- Caring connected while always being professional – need education
- Education on recognizing signs/symptoms of disengaged – staff with mental illness
- Mental Health aspects, especially of staff – burnout, anxiety, medication; Pre-Camp Traumatic Experience Preparedness – training including letting other people in and accepting help – collecting information *after* acceptance to help facilitate better care during a person’s time at camp; lack of tenacity/ability to make it through a summer – needing more self-care/time off – how do draw lines between challenging them to push through vs. pampering them; ditto (Virginias; Texoma; Ohio; Oregon Trail)

Health & Wellness

- What to do with a Flu outbreak
- Hantavirus death – to be aware
- Ticks – challenging last summer (UNY)

Research

- Research!! Camp directors need to be educated on the research we are doing and metrics used – how do they tell the story?

Governance

- LCOL diversity – does the LCOL reflect the diversity of the area.
- Comment on LCOL being cliquish – succession planning important
- Changes in the LCOL/transitions/onboarding; LCOL Transition Planning (Virginias; Oregon Trail)