



**American Camp Association**  
**National Council of Leaders Discussion Notes**  
**February, 21, 2017**

**Diversity and ACA Standards:** *What revision of standard HR-11 is appropriate and relevant related to inclusion (all types) for ALL camps going through the accreditation process?*

- Reach out to an outside expert like the Avrana group
- Use hiring practices as a guideline
- Compile lists/resources from camps that can be shared
- ACA, CK is very diverse – staff understanding the different special needs. Teaching staff to be more respectful. Is this the only standard that addresses special needs?
- Sari – expanding the definition to list all of diversity not just multicultural
- Eli – broadening the dimensions it’s missing the inclusion part too. Add an element of inclusion will be critical
- Shannon - How do you encourage inclusion without making it required if you represent one group i.e. Jewish camp. To the mission of the camp, if your all girls you shouldn’t have to make it for boy but address other diversity.
- Eli – what does the application
- John Q. – does your camp blah blah blah.... broader question
- Tom – Aren’t there laws that protect against discrimination. Don’t want to be duplicating laws in the standards. Marty – there are laws around staff but not campers
- Mike – do we change the word to “recruit”
- Shannon NE – states to states how consistent are the laws
- Marty – how do we implement it. Identify all the possible elements of diversity then talking about what that means then being inclusive.
- Maggie – this is focused on training but should it be more about the entire camp. Are they looking at serving a more diverse population?
- Sari – recruit vs what comes to you
- Pearl – has the camp done feasibility study in there are to know what the diverse needs are to their area. Evaluate the policy of the need of their community. What is your target market? If it’s your county we need to serve the group of people in this community. Mark – your camp serve the diversity of the community you are in.
- Maggie – how have you determined what your target population is. Then what do you do when you identify that population.
- Tom – it’s a Rabbit whole. ACA and the camp – chasing things.
- Eli – is our end goal to prompt that camp to do this? Frame of mind
- John Q – as an organization have you looked at the population
- Tim N – Going and finding new people to come to your camp but what if you are used to and like the set of population that you serve.
- Shannon – what’s the way for us to serve more kids. How do I serve more different girls?

- Mark – look around this room. There is a lack of it. From a multicultural stand point we do not reflect it. After school care, does the staff person look like me. Use to be a standard that asked if your staff reflects your camp population.
- Sari – are we prepared to be more inclusive.
- Shannon – are our environments welcoming to other populations. What does success look like?
- Eli – how do you assess your risk? It's open ended for each camp.
- Tom – medical needs, gender issues etc
- Maggie – you could have the standard be an A and a B question.
- This question HR-11 is only about training. There needs to be a question before assessing below:
  - What does Diversity mean?
  - How do you assess Diversity?
  - Recruit vs what comes to us?
- Then how do you train the staff.
- Very Passive standards – it doesn't specifically describe how inclusion is done. Even during visit Camp Directors just say they do training – What
- The contextual education is where you get your teeth –What we need to have contextual education, when need to be specific about what inclusion is and looks like.
- Operational Management - How are you teaching people to respect others and introducing policies to ensure implementation.
- Looking for ways to serve the specific group, with being exclusionary.
- Even within a homogenous group you still have difference that need to be protected.
- How or what technique expose their staff to that continue to promote Diversity and Inclusion – To foster inclusion.
- Providing resource and education to help camps become compliant
- Current standard is not applicable to rental camps

**Camp Security: Raising the Bar on Readiness** - *What actions or opportunities should ACA consider due to recent and increasing active threats from individuals or groups to public and private gathering places?*

- Need updated best practices
- Contact with local authorities and develop a specific plan together
- Camps battling against resources. Ex: law enforcement insurance
- Camps fearful to put drills into practice. Fear of blow back from parents
  - If camps only drill is to gather – not a good practice
  - State police have a drill
- Homeland security provides a video each year
- Checklist/Decision tree to help camps see where they are vulnerable and to think beyond the active shooter
- Opportunity to partner with local schools.
- Provide resources for planning entirely
  - Remote to urban camps
  - Include communication plan and getting information out effectively
  - Office of Emerging Management may have valuable resources
- YUSA provided some information
  - Encouraged partnering with local law enforcement
  - Learning from others
  - Secondary team/back up jobs important
  - Code words for local law enforcement
- ACA collect what camps are doing – share and educate
  - Make it a standard...like AED standard
- 2 day trainings for active shooter/risk management at all local areas
- Kids are already engaged and doing this in school
- ACA develop educational opportunities with facts so camps can determine appropriate steps
- Tom – part of their crisis plan
- Tim – county/state police came to help us create the crisis plan. A.L.I.C.E. training
- Shannon – we do drill it with the campers. We explain what they are supposed to do. Share the same and difference from school.
- Mark – if we want it to be more in place it needs to be a standard.
- Eli – intruder has a standard from 1980, but not to the concerns we have now. What ACA can do is, share webinars, articles, vendors with discounts, resources to share with members.
- Mark – Jazmin gathering resources and share at Regional meetings
- Maggie – suggest to Markel that they do more around this topic. ACA could facilitate resources from vendors
- John Q. – how to we make each camp safe based on the situation, location, and layout of the camp. Some might not want a gate.

- Tom – what do the insurance companies think about the risk. Maggie – it will vary based on your camp. Even if it's minimal still have a plan. Tom - will insurance put their money in that.
- Tim – response time 3 vs 20 minutes
- Shannon – federal and local authorities. People are making money off camps and the end result isn't positive. Let's pick the right people to lead/ good practices.
- Tom – Create a self-assessment to assess your risk
- Maggie – could Markel fund the creation of the assessment tool?
- Shannon – a check list about how to have a conversation about the needs.
- Mark – my camp has no locked doors.
- Pearl – what is the best practices vs what we thought
- Tim – you have to assess your facility
- John Q – anyone can be a target
- Maggie – having a check list that can provide guidance/resources. Then each camp can decide what vendor to use.
- Shannon – it's such a low risk but is it sustainable. There are other things that are more important relevant. I hate to see camps spending money and time on this when it really won't happen.
- Sari – out trips incorporate if you are a secondary target – what do you do then? That might be for likely to happen than someone coming on to your camp.
- Pearl – once it's developed it can be merged into the risk management standards
- Maggie – just because the risk is low it doesn't mean we shouldn't have a plan for it.
- ACA create something to help camps evaluate their risk. Flow and direction to your thought process/preparation. Assess it every year.
- Partnerships
- Pull-up reports
- Provide information and statistics to camps about the threat of security (e.g. incidents etc.)-
- Developing Best Practices for security/Resource Bank – depending on
- Recommendations for security trainings
- Many of the trainers are don't have enough experience with camps to properly train Camp
- Emotional Health Debriefing – Transitioning from a threatening situation to normal
- Develop a list of questions (e.g. checklist or security assessment tool) that could guide the thinking of planning security at your camp
- Almost every location has a Sheriff (or local law enforcement) – Local law enforcement could provide a security brief – Pulling in professionals to facilitate planning discussion

## Volunteer Engagement Work

### What are the top 3-5 volunteer development needs for your Council/Board?

#### Strategic

- Strategic question -- What do we want/need volunteers to do?
  - we only have one event, where else can we use the volunteers (Alex)
- Develop how we think about shorter term engagement
  - Find bite size levels of volunteerism – committees/ Task forces (Andy)
- Micro volunteering. People aren't looking for long term commitments (Jude)
- How do both engage emerging professionals and veteran professionals? (starting with Strategic Planning)

#### Recruitment

- Have State contact points
- Still in need of local touch points to cover large geographic area. – HS
- no system for the volunteer match form – how do you plug them in when you don't know who they are (Kim)
- What was the hook that got us in? Personal ask (Susan Yoder) or the boss said get involved (Tony)
- Do people think volunteering is more of a time commitment (Lana)
- How do think more holistically about member recruitment and engagement – How do we think about some those short-term opportunities (Maybe a list or Best practices of how to recruit)
- Same group of people at the table. How do we get more people engaged throughout the year? (Mark)
- Mid-States Conference – Better way to engage Front-Line Staff

#### Operations

- Conduct Training and orientation
- Volunteer Orientation and training – having an organized onboarding process
- How do you manage volunteers (Maggie)
- Succession planning, looking over policies and procedures because things have changed with the staff involvement. What do we need volunteers for? Meaningful jobs. (John D.)
- Professional Development cross sponsorship

#### Recognition

- Develop Recognition & Appreciation standards ( not necessarily uniformity)
- What is the best way to show appreciation to volunteers?

## **Communication**

- Develop/ utilize ACA Connect
- We keep losing members. Connecting LCOL members together and build and identify around the UNY field office.( John Q.)
- Using ACA Connect to foster subject(s)
- Standards instructors/volunteers could connect across the country (Dan)

## **What “synergistic” opportunities do we have across Councils, Boards or Regions that could help us provide better opportunities/services to our members?**

- Engage EPIC & OPIC
- Better connection with “niche” groups: i.e.-Kindred
- Opportunities might be closer in other councils
- Better engage front line staff in opportunities
- Enhance discussions at local levels based on a national perspective
- Trends are identified
- NCOL meetings
- More opportunities to connect with neighboring field offices – virtual and in person
- Virtual meetings need to be more often (Dan)
- We are doing well with east now need to connect with the other regions (John D.)
- Leadership Chair summit has been helpful each year (Tony)
- Identifying trends and observations via subject group based on National perspectives

## **What new volunteer opportunities /positions have you recently developed or explored for your Council/Board?**

- Finding volunteers for the AAR as they serve 100 camps a year. Why can't it be a pool from across the country not just by field office. Everyone get assigned 10 AAR's (Susie )
- Social media volunteers
- Highlight camps to foster connections
- Single point of entry
- Better leverage volunteers as “SME's” rather than grunt labor
- EPIC
- Volunteer Development
- ACA connect will bring experts out
- Committees
- Providing development to existing committees
- Social Media Person – Member Engagement
- Camp Spotlight(er) – Once a month highlighting a Camp
- Community Manager/Subject Matter Thought Leader (Broderick Clark)

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

**NCOL:**

- More opportunities to connect with neighbors
- Regular virtual meeting
- Like minded volunteers from field offices
- PD opportunities w/geographic area
- How to learn from other LCO Field offices
- Leadership summit
- Standards instructors crossing the lines
- AAR volunteers – pool from across the country

**Mental Health:**

- Resources
- Trauma informed care
  - Behavior
- We create a safe place for campers
  - Are staff trained to deal with what may come?
  - Standing orders
  - Legal issues
- Anxiety disorders – Am I safe?
  - Staff
    - Medications – forget to ref.
    - How do we help them?
- Best practicing for securing mental health pros
- Better connection between ACA + CAN
- Trauma informed care
- Children/Campers Anxiety - fearing injury or prejudice
- How do we handle psych issues and properly prepare or prevent negative impact on the issue?
- How do we access the health care silo then bring that information to the camp community?
- Developing Best Practices around Mental Health Care (MESH)

**Recruitment and Retention – Staff**

- Recruit for African American other multi-cultural staff
- ACA take lead on advocating work at camp
- Also with corporate partners
- Help us leverage with colleges and universities
- Resume writing
- Leverage camp experience
- Start conversation with our connections at universities

- Service learning
- Getting staff to return and not take other opportunities
- Perhaps having a repository of potential employees that can be shared.
- Warm Body issue - Hiring staff that are not the best for the job
- Diversity – Trying to recruit for African American or appropriate ethnic group to be Camp Staff
- Step Up or Step Out – Clearly communicating that it is expected for returning staff to take more responsibility or think about applying for other jobs
- Promoting Benefits of Being a Counselor
- Leverage relationships of other Companies to hire Camp Staff
- Providing a tool or means that will allow Camp Counselor to articulate their strengths and experience
- Service Learning - Practical grad student opportunities that will allow them to complete their course work while helping camps

### **Gender Identity**

- Susie – get calls from Camp Directors, what do I do? Camps or staff, identified as Jane and now they are Joe
- What is my legal responsibility?
- Camp needs to decide what kind of culture do they want. Accommodate to the best of their ability
- Ross – where do we house them. Nothing that they were considered about came through. The younger generation is so embraced. Lots of concern with no impacts.
- Eli – great opportunity, a parent was surprised that she would accept her now male child at camp.
- John Q. – overnight camps where will they sleep and what restroom will they use. Everything else is ok these are the two big things.
- Susie – camps will be on the wrong side of history if they do not learn how to incorporate it into the culture now.
- Shannon NE – there are some camps that have been doing it for a while.
- John Q. – being accepting is what camp is all about.
- John D. – will ACA take a stand on it instead of saying you come up your policy.
- Jude – shared about what happened when ACA tried to force camps to take black children.
- Andy – adults are panicking and the kids are seeing it at school it's not new. They are having someone speak at as many events as possible esp camp directors.
- Mark – who do I talk to, cabin parents? What's the messaging?
- Jude – community on ACA Connect.
- Lana – parent didn't give any direction, parents were struggling with what the child is going through.
- Susie – there will be more changes they could feel one way one summer and return the following as another.
- Shannon – why do we divide as genders? Smith, you need to identify as a female if you transition you have to be ok with the school still focusing on female issues.



- Calls to parents
- Calls by camp directors
- Staff identity
- What parents want for their child
- What is the message and to who
- What is my legal responsibility?
- Sleep arrangements/restroom use
- Legal advice

### **Marijuana**

- DC, Mass and Maine are now legal.
- Steve – if I have 21 yr. olds can I keep them from having them on site and being sober. Sounds like the crisis is getting worse.
- Tony – the license for marijuana to be medicinal. Where are, they keeping the drug in their locker or with the nurse?
- Shannon – you have a policy that you cannot use marijuana on site even though it's medically prescribed? Alcohol vs marijuana. Marijuana stays in your system longer.
- Mark – do you need to say “you need to be sober” when you get to work. Because it's legal doesn't make it ok when you are working with kids.
- Jude – you can have a beer with dinner and not be drunk. If you smoke something potent you might not be good for the next shift.
- John Q. – opioids are getting worse, heard it was bad in Ohio is wondering how bad it's elsewhere.
- Dan – hears about 10 overdoses a day.
- Eli – it's not affecting camp yet.
- Tony – it was in the Red Cross training.
- Shannon – takes time to find out someone is that situation.

### **Government Regulation State and National**

- Affordable Care Act
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- How to deal with national divisiveness (perhaps camp could be a leader in that area)