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CAMP BEHAVIOR

Camp Moshava has been successfully providing a summer of safe, age appropriate and memorable experiences for children for many years. We have been pleased to be able to serve generations of families as well as multiple siblings from the same family. With few exceptions, Camp Moshava welcomes and integrates all the children accepted for our program and year after year parental praise for our work has been the rule. We are grateful for all of your letters of appreciation and expressions of satisfaction with our efforts. We have every intention of continuing to care for your children with the same concern, interest, and energy as we prepare for Kayitz 2022.

The success of our program is based, in part on:

- High standards of care for your children
- High expectations of ourselves and our staff and volunteers
- A value system explained to staff, campers and families
- Boundaries clearly defined for campers and staff

Camp Moshava is a community and a family. The well-being of your children, both physically and emotionally, continues to be our number one priority. In order for us to continue to be successful, we wish to reference the observations and experiences we all have been experiencing through the pandemic. Some children (not all) have been negatively influenced by song lyrics, sexually erotic television programming, movies, books, DVDs, computer games, and the Internet, including chat rooms and pornography. Too much of our society appears to be focused on sexuality and violence, both of which idealize the use of drugs and alcohol. Obviously, our young people cannot avoid seeing, hearing and absorbing that which makes up a substantial part of their young lives. As you well know, we make no judgment on the manner in which our camp families choose to live their lives. However, the care and safety of children living at a camp is very different than a family constellation at home.

Our camp attempts to teach campers:

- To recognize that they have responsibility for themselves and those around them
- To learn to make choices, which are good for themselves and others, and to take responsibility for the choices they make
- To respect oneself and others in spite of differences
- To accept that they are accountable for their actions and the consequences for inappropriate behaviors

It is essential that you communicate to your children that we will not be able to accept behaviors such as bullying (including cyber-bullying and sexting), violence, possessions of weapons, repeated profanity, disrespect, bigotry, homophobic comments, inappropriate sexual behavior, drug and alcohol use, hurtful Internet, cell phone or instant messaging, blogs or any other inappropriate uses of electronic devices (before, during, or after camp) or any other unsafe behaviors that are potentially harmful to themselves

or others. They must understand that a consequence of their behavior can mean the loss of this program.

Our demonstrated interest is to offer only pleasant memories for every camper in our program. It is not our intention to exclude any child. However, that need may unfortunately arise. It is important to discuss in detail your expectations of your child(ren) and that we are, parents and camp management, in total agreement. A child or children asked to leave camp because of behaviors detailed in this memorandum may not be permitted to return in future summers. **Unfortunately, there can be no refund of tuitions.**

Another area of concern has been our experience with some children who have been sent to camp with **"family secrets."** Specifically, children who have fit some of the categories detailed below:

- **Campers with psychiatric problems including suicide gestures or ideation**
- **Campers with serious medical problems**
- **Campers with organic problems who are off medication for the summer**
- **Campers who were hospitalized for physical or emotional reasons since last summer**
- **Campers experiencing traumatic reaction to family issues such as parental separation, divorce, illness or death**

In fairness to our counselors, staff and your child(ren), we need to make informed decisions about all of the young people we invite into our community and family. "Family secrets" serve no one. Our purpose in having pertinent health information, both physical and emotional, is to be able to better serve each child. We must expect that parents or guardians of any child sent to Camp Moshava have provided us with all the necessary information we need to keep all children safe.

With these facts in mind, as directors of Camp Moshava, we must reserve the right to ask that a child at risk to one self or the community be picked up and removed from camp, immediately. There may be a circumstance where we have agreed to accept a child, with full knowledge of his or her problems, and have attempted to take all the necessary steps of making the experience successful but find that we are unable to do so. For the good of this child and/or the community, the child may have to leave.

Finally, as caretakers of your child(ren) we are Mandated Reporters of child abuse. Camp staff and I have the responsibility of reporting to the State Central Registry any indication of abuse. The regulations are specific in that "Seeing, Hearing About or Suspected Abuse" MUST be reported immediately without our right to do our own investigation.

We suggest that you take the time to put into your computer search engine the words **"Mandated Reporter"** and see for yourselves exactly what this issue is all about in the state of Pennsylvania.

This letter would have been unheard of 15 years ago. However, the world has changed and we need to accept the effects of some of those changes. As caretakers of your child(ren) we accept the responsibility of partnering with you and simply ask for your full cooperation. As always, please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about this communication or any other matter. We look forward to Kayitz 2022!

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