

## NO GOSSIP POLICY FOR CAMPERS

*Please read this with your daughter(s) and discuss it so she understands it fully. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sam or Elizabeth.*

The goal of this policy is to eliminate camp gossip, which can strain relationships between campers and counselors. The policy will prohibit gossip about fellow campers, counselors, as well as exclusive cliques among the members of Alleghany's community. The policy is aimed at creating a more team-oriented, positive culture at Alleghany. Alleghany's counselors learned about, signed, and adhered to this policy beginning last summer. We have chosen to now present it to the campers and greater Alleghany community.

We know that some of your best friends are here at camp and that you only get to see them for these three or six weeks a year. In no way do we mean to say that you cannot enjoy those close friendships – these bonds are what keep you all coming back here each summer, and Alleghany thrives on that. But sometimes close friendships turn into exclusive friendships that make others feel unwelcome.

We also know that there are times when the actions of others at camp cause you to want to vent to a friend. But in doing so, you need to ask yourself: is my discussion of this issue aimed at getting it off my chest so that I can return to my day feeling better, or am I doing this in a mean-spirited way, aimed at hurting or mocking, rather than aimed at resolving the issue? Often, the better way to vent your feelings is to discuss the issue with the person who caused it.

There are also situations where you're not the one initiating the gossip. While you might not think you're "to blame" merely by listening, remember that if no one was there to listen, the negative statements would never be made in the first place. Even as a passive participant, just by going along with it, you are contributing to the negative environment.

We ask that you help us in establishing this new policy by asking yourself:

- Am I contributing to a team-oriented atmosphere, or am I (even unintentionally) making others feel unwelcome in a conversation?

- Am I allowing a frustration to fester and then making it worse by discussing it with others?
- Am I disrespecting a camper or counselor by mocking her to my friends?
- Am I giving someone an opportunity to gossip by participating in the conversation?
- Am I repeating or promoting a rumor about camp about which I have no personal knowledge?

We ask that you pledge to help us establish this new policy as a sign of your commitment to make the Alleghany environment the best it can be.

*As a camper of Camp Alleghany, I promise:*

- To be inclusive of others in conversations, activities, and free time;
- To refrain from becoming a part of a clique or exclusive group, so as not to hurt feelings or make others feel unwelcome;
- To refrain from talking about anyone (campers, counselors, other staff members) in a negative or destructive way, and to refrain from participating in conversations where others are doing so;
- To keep my negative thoughts to myself, or if necessary, vent them privately to an appropriate person, such as a counselor or leader, in an effort to resolve the frustration;
- To befriend new campers and help them learn the traditions and rules of Alleghany in a friendly and non-judgmental manner;
- To refrain from spreading rumors that I do not have facts to prove as true, and, if necessary, to ask an authority figure if something is true before repeating it;
- To not tolerate anyone in camp who does not adhere to the above behaviors.

*By signing your name below, you understand and agree to follow the expectations outlined in the Camper No Gossip Policy.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(camper signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(camper printed name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)