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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# CAMP HAZEN YMCA SCHOOLS PROGRAM CHAPERONE GUIDE

Schools and youth groups are recommended to sustain the following ratios:

## **For Overnight Campers:**

- 5 years & younger: 1:5-staff: camper ratio
- 6-8 years: 1:6- staff: camper ratio
- 9-14 years: 1:8-staff: camper ratio
- 15-18 years: 1:10- staff: camper ratio

## **For Day Campers:**

- 5 years & younger: 1:6- staff: camper ratio
- 6-8 years: 1:8- staff: camper ratio
- 9-14 years: 1:10- staff: camper ratio
- 15-18 years: 1:12- staff: camper ratio

## **Minimum Age Recommendations:**

- At least 80 % of your chaperones that will be supervising students are at least 18 years of age or older.
- Camp Hazen YMCA advises that any staff persons on a retreat must be at least 16 years of age, and at least 2 years older than the minors with whom they are working.

Your primary role as a chaperone is supervision. As a supervisor, it is important that safety always be in the forefront of your mind and that you are available to the students in case of any problems that may arise. Supervision responsibilities for the various times of the day are outlined below along with suggestions for ways to make the most of your role.

**CLASSES:** Camp Hazen Staff or teachers from your school will lead all the classes and activities, but a second adult should be present with each teaching group. Please be available at the start of the activity period to join a group and remain with them for the entire time.



## **Chaperone Guide (Continued)**

### **Your role during activity periods:**

- Encourage participation and enthusiasm by being a positive role model.
- Adhere to and help enforce any rules, guidelines or safety measures set down by the instructor.
- Assist with discipline as requested by the instructor. If one student is being particularly disruptive, take him or her aside so the class may continue uninterrupted.
- Accompany individual students to the lead teacher or their cabin if necessary.

### **Suggestions to make class time as beneficial as possible for all involved:**

Allow the instructor of the group to be in charge. If you disagree with the instructor about something, speak to him or her privately or bring your concerns to the lead teacher or Program Director. Please do not contradict the instructor in front of the students

Participate and get involved in the activity. Enjoy yourself, but keep in mind that the classes are designed to provide a learning experience for the students. The students need leadership, but often one of the goals of an activity is for the students to find their own leadership within the group. Please allow them to do this. Specifically within Team Building Activities, we ask chaperones to step back and let the students work through the problems.

**MEALS:** Supervision during meals is very important to maintain a smooth and pleasant dining hall. There should be one adult and seven students at each table. The adult should actively supervise the table as a role model and enforce the rules and procedures of the dining hall. Meal times can be a learning experience for students as well. Cooperation, responsibility, courtesy and food appreciation are all valuable lessons that are emphasized in the dining hall.

### **Guidelines to keep mealtimes pleasant for all:**

- Make sure that all students except the table waiter stay seated until the meal is completely over (table is clean and announcements have been made).
- Make sure the students treat the waiter with respect. All students should help with passing and serving the food during the meal, and with sorting and stacking plates, cutlery etc after the meal.
- Encourage students to take pride in their eating space by keeping the table in order throughout the meal.

**FREETIME:** The schedule at Camp Hazen is a busy one, but there are times throughout the day when the students can relax. These times are before and after each meal and after evening programs. There is also a short bathroom break between some classes. Camp Hazen Staff do not supervise students during free time, as this is the responsibility of the school. Accidents are most



## **Chaperone Guide (Continued)**

likely to occur during unstructured time so it is very important to make sure the students are supervised.

### **Please follow these guidelines:**

- Group leaders are responsible for the supervision of youth during free time.
- If you have an extended break between programs, it can be a good idea to create a supervision schedule, so that chaperones can also take a break.
- Get the students involved in something fun – organize a soccer or softball game, or take a group on a hike.
- Do not take them to the Team Building or Ropes Course. These areas **MUST** be supervised by Camp Hazen Staff.
- Remind students to get a drink of water or use the restroom between classes.

**LODGES:** Supervision in cabins and lodges is one of the chaperones' most important roles and often the task in which you receive the least assistance and support. "Cabin-time" can be a very significant and special time for students. Often their experiences in the cabin or lodge are remembered long beyond the academic lessons. Get to know the students in your cabin and help them process and learn from their experiences.

### **Suggestions for making the most of "cabin-time":**

- Students are not allowed in any building without an adult.
- As soon as possible after you arrive, sit down with the students you will be living with to discuss guidelines for the cabin. Living in a group requires communication, cooperation and compromise.
- Do things together as a group – play a game, make a collage, write a poem or a song, organize a formal sharing time each night or cabin chat.
- Help the students to feel comfortable and show them that you really care; it's well worth the effort!

The job of a chaperone is a challenging one, but also a rewarding one. It requires a great deal of effort and energy but when you realize how much you've done for the students, it will definitely seem worthwhile. You may feel overwhelmed, but remember that you have lots of support. You are not the only chaperone; there are others to share responsibilities. Communicate with other chaperones and the leader of the trip and build a team together, work as a group to help create the best possible Hazen experience.

**Thank you for all your help!**