

Youth who have experienced trauma and/or have sensory or social/emotional challenges come to camp feeling off-balance.

Social Cultural Recommendations.

Many youth exhibit unhealthy adrenaline- or adventure-seeking behaviors.

Physical/Medical Recommendations.

Don't assume that all campers have the knowledge or skills to take care of basic hygiene and self-care. Do not assume that all caregivers do either.

Emotional Recommendations.

Quickly establish a consistent relationship with a trustworthy adult, who presents with unconditional positive regard.

Stay positive. Avoid nitpicking. Help youth to identify how *they* are feeling. Use the RULER approach from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence (rulerapproach.org) to assist with regulation.

- **Recognizing** emotions in oneself and others
- **Understanding** the causes and consequences of emotions
- **Labeling** emotions with a nuanced vocabulary
- **Expressing** emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context
- **Regulating** emotions with helpful strategies

Make camp a place to practice executive functioning skills, through planning, organizing, and making decision.

Use mindfulness techniques like slow breathing to help youth re-regulate their emotions.

School/Educational Recommendations.

Use the check-in/check-out process to build in opportunities to connect with an adult, self-monitor behavior, and gain positive reinforcement for positive behaviors.

Replace problem behaviors such as inappropriate boundaries with new skills.

Family Recommendations.

Avoid power struggles.

Review the environment and systems in place at camp to identify places where youth get dysregulated.

Provide options of activities and alternative ways to complete necessary tasks, and breaks.

Sensory Recommendations.

An Occupational Therapist can develop a child-specific sensory diet in order to optimize function in activities of daily living...

Sensory-Seeking Recommendations.

Provide opportunities to increase movement by allowing youth to gather their own supplies or help set the table, and by using rocking chairs, swings and hammocks.

Increase auditory input by playing upbeat music or background noise during routine activities in cabins, bathrooms, etc.

Engaging campers in proprioceptive activity, by providing the option to stand during meal times, or use weighted items like blankets, etc..

Keep campers active!

Provide items and opportunity to engage tactile items through touch with fidgets and sensory items.

Increase movement with trampolines, crab-walk, and other full-body activities.

Enhance sensations of vision, sound and smell by placing interesting pictures or books (like Where's Waldo?), and items like scented markers in places where campers typically have difficulty.

Sensory-Avoiding Recommendations.

Limit extra movement and touch by limiting activities to one space; minimize movement of others around and behind; dampen senses with use of weighted blankets or toys.

Reduce bright lights by use of shades and dimmers in housing areas and designated common spaces.

Minimize odors by using unscented products for cleaning, bathing, laundry, etc...

Allow children to play alone and quietly.

Provide designated quiet spaces for play and rest, and for insert name to return to a regulated state.

Identify and allow for campers to have favorite items, positions and experiences.

Make and share a plan prior to starting a task to avoid unknown components. Use check-lists and visual schedules.