

8. Beating Up My Disabled Brother

A counselor consulted with his camp director after encountering a concerning situation in his cabin. A camper in his group shared that when he gets angry at home, he beats up his younger, disabled brother, saying, "When I get mad, I bash in my little brother's head!" The counselor was unsure what to do.

The same camper was overheard joking about rape to other campers. When the counselor stepped in and said, "Hey, you can't joke about rape," the camper replied, "You can joke about it when it has happened to you."

What can we learn from this case?

Policies and Risk Management	Staff Training	Key Takeaway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your state have mandatory child abuse training and reporting laws? Who on your staff are considered mandated reporters? • Do your policies and procedures train staff to identify their role as counselors if they come across suspected child abuse? • Do you know whom to call when you have a suspected child abuse case? What if the camper lives out of state or in another county? Another country? • How will you manage other campers hearing about potential abuse? • To prevent abuse in your camp, do you conduct a robust screening of all staff and volunteers before giving them access to campers? • Do you have supervision policies and a culture that prevents staff from ever being alone with a camper? • Do you have adequate supervision of campers to prevent camper-on-camper abuse? • Are staff prohibited from babysitting campers outside of camp? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are staff trained in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ How to recognize possible signs of abuse? ◦ How to prevent abuse? ◦ How to respond when there is a suspicion of abuse? • Are staff trained in policies and procedures to prevent them from ever being alone with a camper? • Are staff trained to listen to campers and not promise to keep everything they say confidential? • Are staff trained to ensure that campers are appropriately supervised and to disclose when they suspect a fellow staff person is not following rules? Do you employ and enforce child abuse prevention protocols? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone on your team is a mandated reporter! • Know how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to prevent abuse in your camp. • Know how and where to report suspected cases of child abuse.

Resources

- [Child Abuse Prevention Resources: ACACamps.org/resources/child-abuse-prevention-resources](https://www.acacamps.org/resources/child-abuse-prevention-resources)
- Child Abuse Reporting Numbers, [National Council on Child Abuse & Family Violence](https://www.preventfamilyviolence.org/child-abuse-reporting-numbers): preventfamilyviolence.org/child-abuse-reporting-numbers
- [Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect](https://www.acacamps.org/events-education/online-learning/online-course/recognizing-reporting-child-abuse-neglect), an online course presented by Mary Fuller Everhart: ACA-camps.org/events-education/online-learning/online-course/recognizing-reporting-child-abuse-neglect
- ["Respond: How to Respond to Disclosure & Suspicion of Abuse,"](https://www.redwoodsgroup.com/resources/respond-how-to-respond-to-disclosure-suspicion-of-abuse) Redwoods Group Resources:redwoodsgroup.com/resources/respond-how-to-respond-to-disclosure-suspicion-of-abuse