



# CAMP POLICIES: PREVENTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT



Dear staff,

Welcome!

At Telluride Academy, we take our responsibility to care for campers very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate an excellent camp experience for all those who spend time at TELLURIDE ACADEMY.

The pages of this handbook addendum provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members that are designed to prevent sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect of campers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for campers, protecting campers, you, and the mission of TELLURIDE ACADEMY. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

***Telluride Academy Board of Directors and Administration***

# TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Policies: Preventing Abuse and Neglect

## Contents:

- Overview of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety System..... 4
- Camper Safety Policy ..... 5
- Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse ..... 6
- TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee ..... 7
- Staff Member/Volunteer Monitoring Plan..... 8
- Camp Culture – Staff Members & Volunteers ..... 9
- Camp Culture – Campers ..... 10
- Supervision of Campers ..... 12
- Rules for Camper Safety..... 14
- Camper Contact Policy for Current and Former Staff..... 17
- Acknowledgement and Agreement ..... 18

## **Overview of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety System**

Because we care for and desire to protect campers, TELLURIDE ACADEMY requires all staff members to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before placement.

### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY policies and procedures require that staff members avoid abusive or neglectful behavior of any kind. Staff members are required to report any policy violations to a supervisor or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administrative Team. Staff members should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers, as well as “grooming behaviors” used by abusers to select and prepare a camper for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s care-giver or ‘gatekeeper’), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, TELLURIDE ACADEMY requires all staff members to complete an online sexual abuse awareness training offered by Abuse Prevention Systems. ([www.AbusePreventionSystems.com](http://www.AbusePreventionSystems.com)). This training will be renewed every two years.

### **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Staff members are required to complete the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Screening Process, which requires a staff member to:

- complete an Employment Application
- complete a face-to-face or telephone interview
- provide references to be checked

### **STEP THREE: Review Policies & Procedures**

Staff members are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page, indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

### **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY requires that all staff members undergo a criminal background check.

## **Camper Safety Policy**

### **ABUSE TOLERANCE**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY has a **zero tolerance for abuse**. It is the responsibility of every TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff member and volunteer to act in the best interest of campers in every program.

In the event any staff member observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is the personal responsibility of each such staff member to immediately report their observations to an immediate supervisor, TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administration, or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the TELLURIDE ACADEMY administration and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

TELLURIDE ACADEMY intends to create and foster a culture of communication, reporting safety concerns or policy violations. Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members are asked to report possible ‘grooming’ behaviors, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members who supervise other employees are charged with the diligent enforcement of all TELLURIDE ACADEMY policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment for both volunteers and staff members.

## **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

### **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

In order to maintain a safe environment for campers, TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members must be aware of each individual's responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor, a TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Administrator, or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED OR HARMFUL ACT**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act, or any act considered to be harmful to a child, will be immediately suspended from participation at TELLURIDE ACADEMY. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act will be removed from future participation as a staff member in all activities and programming that involve campers at TELLURIDE ACADEMY. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from TELLURIDE ACADEMY.

Failure to report a prohibited act to one of the individuals identified above is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of a staff member or dismissal of a volunteer.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Telluride Academy operates by best practices and requires staff to report ALL suspicions or allegations of abuse. Telluride Academy staff are considered mandatory reporters in the state of Colorado and will work with Telluride Academy administration to submit a report of abuse to Colorado's Child Welfare Services. Staff will also submit a Telluride Academy Incident Report to be kept on file. Telluride Academy also works closely with the San Miguel Resource Center and staff are encouraged to utilize the support and resources of this local organization.

**WHEN IN DOUBT, REPORT!**

# **TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee**

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, TELLURIDE ACADEMY will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet once each month during camp season. At the end of the camping season, the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee will meet to discuss what, if any, changes are necessary to TELLURIDE ACADEMY's policies or programming to ensure camper safety.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable TELLURIDE ACADEMY to carry out appropriate camp activities while safeguarding campers against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

## **COMPOSITION**

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

1. Telluride Academy Administrators
2. One or more Telluride Academy Board Member(s)
3. One or more Field Instructors
4. Telluride Academy's Inclusion Director

## **MEETINGS**

The Safety Committee will meet on a monthly basis during camp season to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Safety Committee may also meet, when necessary, to address a circumstance or respond to the report of any incident or allegation. At the end of the summer programming season, the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee will meet to discuss what, if any, changes are necessary to TELLURIDE ACADEMY's policies or programming to ensure camper safety.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing TELLURIDE ACADEMY policies and procedures related to camper safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all TELLURIDE ACADEMY programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations regarding safety issues to the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administration and Board of Directors.

## **Staff Member and Volunteer Monitoring Plan**

Monitoring of staff members may include regular (announced and unannounced) visits throughout the summer to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member interactions with campers.

1. **The TELLURIDE ACADEMY Program Director** conducts written performance evaluations at the completion of every summer season for all Field Instructors.
2. **Field Instructors** conduct co-instructor evaluations at the completion of each program for each staff member in his/her program. This evaluation will include matters covered in this policy manual, student interaction, collaboration and adherence to risk management procedures.



## **Camp Culture – Staff Members & Volunteers**

### **MODELING BEHAVIOR**

What we do in moderation, campers will do in excess. Campers will look to you to set the boundaries they will test. This is a dilemma with which every staff member will wrestle. The way you dress, what you say, how you respond to the smallest circumstance – our campers are watching. If you communicate that it is OK to move an inch, they *will* go a mile. Please read and understand the guidelines below regarding appropriate “touch, talk & territory” and follow them closely.

The following rules are to be followed at all times:

- **No Verbal Abuse**
- **Never touch a child in an aggressive manner**
- **Absolutely No Profanity**
- **No Displays of Public Nudity at Any Time**
- **No Mooning, De-Pantsing, Wedgies or Swirlies**
- **No Descriptive Stories Regarding Drinking or Sexual Behaviors**
- **No Urinating Off Porches at Any Time by Anyone**
- **No Sleeping or Napping with Campers for Any Reason**
- **Never Compare a Camper’s Body with Another Camper or Staff/Volunteer**
- **No Racial Put-Downs or Racial Jokes**
- **No Ear or Body Piercing or Tattooing of Any Camper**
- **No Tickling Campers**
- **No Wrestling**

### **APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL TOUCH**

All staff members should exercise good judgment when expressing one’s self through physical touch. Appropriate physical touch may include the following:

1. An arm around the shoulder (side hug)
2. Short, congratulatory or greeting hugs
3. A brief, assuring pat on the head or shoulder, but NOT to those kids who feel that such touch is offensive to have their heads patted or hair fluffed.
4. A few NEVERS:
  - a. We don’t touch kids in anger or disgust.
  - b. We don’t touch kids in any sexually connotative manner.
  - c. No staff member will ever (day or night) be on or in a child’s bed.
  - d. Never touch a child’s private parts (to remove ticks or for any other reason).
  - e. Never tickle a child; this can be misconstrued as sexual contact.
  - f. Never ignore a camper’s request not to be touched.
  - g. Never express or require physical affection or touching in any form from a child who shows or expresses discomfort with physical touch.

If a question ever arises, consult a Program Supervisor or the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administrator.

Any infraction of the above policy involving even the slightest form of sexual connotation will result in immediate dismissal from the camp with no chance of rehire.

## Camp Culture – Campers

### **BULLYING**

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying will not be tolerated.

The majority of camper-on-camper verbal, physical and emotional harassment occurs at night when the lights are out, and you are in bed. In order to avoid this, we ask that you always maintain a constant presence in the student tent area. Instructors should sleep within “zipper shot” of their students at all times!

It should be made clear from the first minute of every session that verbal, physical or emotional harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. At the first sign of verbal or other attacks, act decisively. There is no “harmless putdown” when dealing with kids.

- a. First instance comes with a warning to the camper and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is inappropriate. Make sure not to embarrass or chastise them.
- b. Second instance requires that you pull the offending camper(s) from the group and discuss the inappropriateness of bullying behavior. Set some clear parameters and behavioral goals for them to achieve. Let them know that you will be informing TELLURIDE ACADEMY administrators of your agreed upon policy as well as their parents. Keep in mind that any “repeat offenses” or concerning signs of bullying or verbal abuse warrant the notification of TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administrators.
- c. Make sure that any camper who is the brunt of bullying attacks is handling the situation well. Have a private dialogue with him or her to assess the situation. **DO NOT SINGLE CAMPERS OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP!** Be discreet and protect their dignity.
- d. Third instance results in immediate communication with TELLURIDE ACADEMY administration and parents and may result in a student’s dismissal from the remainder of the program.

### **RESPECTING CAMPER PRIVACY**

Make sure campers understand the importance of respecting each other’s privacy. A camper’s sleeping bag, bunk or bed is his/her home and the camper’s backpack is off-limits to anyone but the camper. In addition, should a program involve bathing or showers, it is imperative that it is made clear that shower time is a very private time. During showers, only those who are taking showers should be in the bathroom or shower stall.

### **DISCIPLINE**

It is the policy of TELLURIDE ACADEMY that staff members are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of campers. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by campers. If a camper is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from a staff member/volunteer, the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Administrator will contact the camper’s parent. If the behavior persists, the camper’s parent will be contacted to pick up the camper. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, a staff member will verbally

redirect campers involved, trying to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to a Program Supervisor and/or the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Administrator.

### **VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between staff members and campers should be positive and uplifting. TELLURIDE ACADEMY employees should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging and constructive.

To this end, staff members should not talk to campers in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, employees are expected to refrain from swearing or using profanity in the presence of campers.

## **Supervision of Campers**

### **STAFF MEMBER/VOLUNTEER TO CAMPER RATIO**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY is committed to providing adequate instructor supervision during all camp activities and programs at all times. Accordingly, the following ratios will be observed for camp activities and programs:

For groups up to and including 13 campers, there will be at least 2 supervising Field Instructors. This ratio may increase depending on the activity (i.e. biking, boating)

If a worker is out of ratio it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the Program Director. The Program Director will make diligent efforts to immediately bring staff and camper ratios into compliance with this policy.

### **OFF-LIMIT AREAS**

All TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members will be responsible for ensuring that their campers are not in areas deemed off-limits.

### **MONITORING HIGH-RISK AREAS**

**The purpose of this section is to become aware of *high-risk* areas at camp, and methods to effectively lower that risk.** Any areas on camp property where campers are not directly supervised is a high-risk area. In these areas, campers can more easily bully and abuse (verbally, physically, and even sexually) each other. It is the responsibility of all staff members to be aware of the potential for bullying and abuse, and to monitor camp locations where campers can be alone.

For activities involving large numbers of campers, staff members will be assigned to monitor high risk areas for the duration of the activity. Monitoring of high-risk areas will be built in to the programming and planning for these events.

High-Risk Areas include:

- all bathrooms on school and or overnight property
- night activities
- water activities
- changing areas (during day and night)
- tents

### **UNOBSERVED ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTION WITH CAMPERS**

No camper will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during camp programming or activities. TELLURIDE ACADEMY staff members are prohibited from being alone with an individual camper in any room, vehicle or other environment. In the event a staff member finds himself/herself alone with a single camper, that staff member will take the camper to an environment occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others.

After every programming day, staff members must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving to ensure that there is no camper left unsupervised.

Any two campers together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

### **APPROPRIATE ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CAMPERS**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY recognizes that meeting the emotional needs of campers may occasionally require staff member to meet with them on an individual basis. Staff Members should observe the following guidelines when interacting with campers.

Staff members should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual camper at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed, unless prior approval is obtained from the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administrator.

In the event a closed-door meeting must occur, the staff member must inform another staff member and ensure the door remains unlocked.

Staff members should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual camper at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.

## **Rules for Camper Safety**

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY is committed to protecting campers in its care. To this end, TELLURIDE ACADEMY has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our camp programs. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working at TELLURIDE ACADEMY:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members and campers are important for camper's development and are generally suitable in the camp setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, a TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Administrator, or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the camper, never based upon the emotional needs of a staff member.
4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other campers or staff members. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or interpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Staff members are responsible for protecting campers under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by other adults and campers.
6. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by any staff member, volunteer or camper must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administration or a member of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Safety Committee.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

While it is extremely rare, there are circumstances that may place a staff members in a position to provide transportation for individual campers. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when staff are involved in the transportation of campers:

1. Campers should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops in a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one camper in transport. The presence of at least two staff members or students is encouraged.
2. Staff members should avoid physical contact with campers while in vehicles.
3. The use of cell phones while driving TELLURIDE ACADEMY vehicles is prohibited, unless in an emergency. In other non-emergency circumstances, staff members are to stop the vehicle before using a cell phone.
4. Absolutely NO TEXTING is allowed by the driver of a moving TELLURIDE ACADEMY vehicle.
5. No drivers under age 21 may drive TELLURIDE ACADEMY owned or rented vehicles when students are passengers.

## **SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Staff members will strictly observe the following rules:

1. At least one staff member is required to be within “zipper shot” (*eyes and ears distance*) of the sleeping area with campers at all times. Notwithstanding the appearance that all campers are sleeping, the staff member will not leave the sleeping area.
2. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn to bed.
3. During bed checks, staff members should never physically touch a camper.
4. Campers will not share a bed, bunk or sleeping bag with another camper or staff member/volunteer. Each staff member, volunteer, and camper will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a “one-person-to-one bag or blanket” rule will be observed.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with campers and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any camper in the program. If it is necessary to address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality, clear such discussions with a Program Supervisor.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS**

Staff members at TELLURIDE ACADEMY are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials or images (magazines, cards, phone pics, videos, etc.) at TELLURIDE ACADEMY or in the presence of campers.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members at TELLURIDE ACADEMY should never be nude in the presence of campers in their care. In the event any a situation calls for the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes before or after a water activity, overnight activity, etc.), staff members will make arrangements for showering or changing clothes that is consistent with this policy statement.

## **TOBACCO**

TELLURIDE ACADEMY requires staff members to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products while on TELLURIDE ACADEMY property, and while in the presence of campers or their family members. TELLURIDE ACADEMY is a tobacco-free facility.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any legal or illegal drug while in any TELLURIDE ACADEMY facility, in attendance at any TELLURIDE ACADEMY event and/or while working with campers.

## **VISITORS DURING CAMP SESSION**

Friends and family are a great source of encouragement. However, it is difficult to give them the time they need when you are discharging your responsibilities as a camp staff member. Visiting friends and family will not be permitted at camp outside normal drop-off and pick-up times unless permission is provided by the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Administrator.



## **Camper Contact Policy for Current and Former Staff**

### **COMMUNICATIONS WITH CAMPERS OUTSIDE OF CAMP**

The TELLURIDE ACADEMY safety standards established to protect campers and ensure healthy relationships during camp should be respected outside of camp as well. In addition to camp safety standards, the following policies should be respected in all interactions with campers occurring outside of camp.

- Parents of all campers must approve any and all interactions with students, including but not limited to: email, social network interactions, phone calls, personal visits. No interaction should ever take place without the knowledge and approval of the camper's parents or guardian.
- If a camper requests to be a “friend” on Facebook or similar social networking sites, permission from parents should be granted before accepting these offers.
- Current or former staff members should never be alone with a camper in an unobserved context or location. This is a policy which takes on even more importance outside of camp.
- Current or former staff members should limit connections by gender. Current or former male staff members should not initiate or maintain contact with female campers. Current or former female staff members should not initiate or maintain contact with male campers. Dating relationships of any kind between staff members and a camper are strictly prohibited.
- If a family invites a current or former staff member to visit, these visits should never involve spending the night at the camper’s home.
- Current or former staff members should never have campers spend the night at their homes for any reason.
- Just like in camp, if a camper shares information that puts them or anyone else in danger, the parents of that child should be notified immediately. When in doubt, err on the side of caution, and contact the TELLURIDE ACADEMY Camp Administrator for counsel.

**Policies and Procedures**  
**Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of TELLURIDE ACADEMY's policies and procedures manual for preventing abuse and neglect and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at TELLURIDE ACADEMY.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by TELLURIDE ACADEMY.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my employment position description. While, ideally, I will serve for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that my service or employment is voluntary and that I may choose to end this relationship at any time (if possible, by providing two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between TELLURIDE ACADEMY and me.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the TELLURIDE ACADEMY policies and procedures manual for preventing abuse and neglect.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member's name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_