



# YMCA OVERNIGHT CAMP CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY 2025

[www.ycamp.ca](http://www.ycamp.ca)

Shine On 

# Overnight Camp Child Guidance Policy

The YMCA's goal is to have an overnight camp where everyone feels safe and included. Our Child Guidance Policy exists to help ensure safety, inclusion and enjoyment in our camps, for all participants.

## Green, Yellow, Red-Light Practice

The green, yellow, orange, red-light practice is to ensure our expectations are clear, and the regulation of uncooperative behaviour is consistent. YMCA camp staff will work proactively with children to decrease the likelihood of uncooperative behaviour, and will react appropriately if uncooperative behaviour is exhibited.

Items such as cabin contracts, think sheets, incident reports, check-in chats and calls home will be used to help campers make positive choices and learn to regulate their own behaviours. Our approach is to validate their feelings, while also holding important safety boundaries.

## Child guidance police on a canoe trip (outtrip)

Our child guidance policy applies both at camp and while on a canoe trip (outtrip). If yellow, orange, and red-light behaviours or the inability to support mental health concerns occur while on outtrip, these will be handled on a case-by-case basis but may result in the outtrip being shorter than intended, the camper(s) returned to camp, or the camper(s) being sent home early from camp. Our extended leadership trips (DEL, venture LIT) and outtrip programs are remote with limited connection to camp, because of this, escalation of yellow, orange, and red light protocols may happen quickly depending on the behaviours and the outtrips location.

Please note: Any suspensions or expulsions from camp due to uncooperative behaviour will not be refunded.

## Green Light

Behaviour exhibited within the Green Light are the standards that we expect from campers during their time at camp, and at the YMCA as a whole, to ensure that each participant has a positive experience. Green light behaviours can look like:



- Caring
- Participating
- Respect
- Inclusive
- Sharing
- Honest
- Responsible
- Using kind language
- Following counsellors' instructions

## Yellow Light

Behaviour exhibited within the Yellow Light will be met with check-in chats with counsellors, the roving team, and the counselling manager. Limits and choices may be given to help manage these behaviours, make better choices, and avoid recurrence. These behaviours and check-in chats will be recorded by the counsellors in their counselling binder for reference and communicated to the counselling manager. Yellow light behaviours can look like:

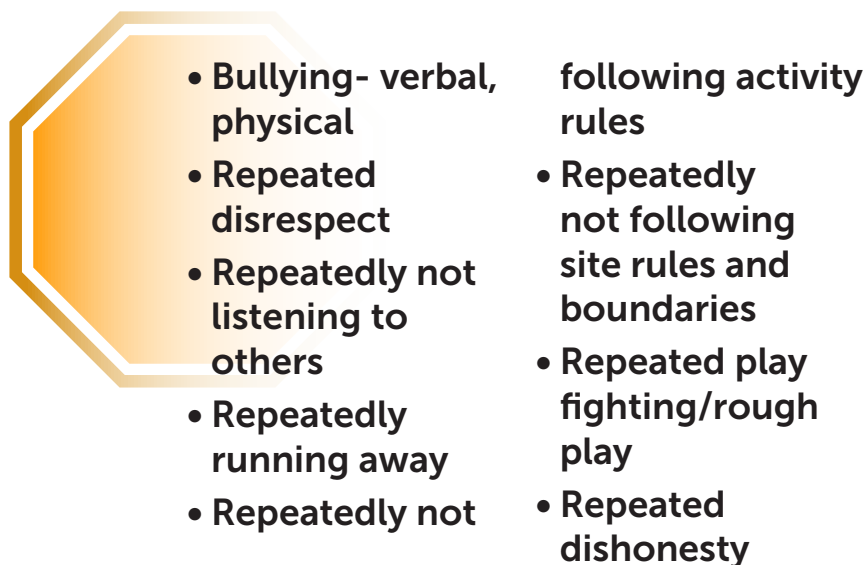


- Disrespectful
- Not listening to others
- Running away
- Not following activity rules
- Not following site rules and boundaries
- Play fighting/ rough play
- Dishonest
- Exclusion

**\*\*If behaviour becomes repeated or is escalated, or at the camps discretion, a phone call home will be made. \*\***

## Orange Light

Behaviour exhibited within the orange light will be met with a sit-down conversation between the camper and a rover or the counselling manager. Together they will discuss the behaviours and come up with ways to work on them. During this conversation a think sheet will be filled out and can be used as a tool to reflect and set goals on how to improve behaviours. The think sheet will also be documentation that is shared with the camp office and parents/guardians. Following this conversation the rover or counselling manager who spoke with the camper will call home. Orange light behaviours can look like:



## Red Light

Behaviour exhibited within the red light will be met with a phone call to the parent/guardian informing them that their camper is being sent home. The camper will not have the opportunity to return back to camp during the session they have left. But if already registered for future sessions opportunity to return will depend both on the severity of the

behaviour, other campers safety, as well as the willingness of both camper and parent/guardian to rectify the behaviour. Red light behaviours can look like:



- Possession of weapon
- Physical aggression to themselves or others
- Hitting with intent to harm
- Repeat "orange light" behaviour
- Sexual behaviour
- Discrimination
- Repeat verbal aggression
- Possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, nicotine products, and cannabis products
- Mental health crisis and/or the inability to properly support camper needs/safety

\*Please note: If a camper is sent home early a refund will not be granted. \*

If you have any questions regarding our child guidance policy please contact us at [cqe@swo.ymca.ca](mailto:cqe@swo.ymca.ca)