

A Message from the President



Getting together with friends is one of my favorite things. But when I have a chance to visit with friends, be inspired by great speakers, and learn from the best in my profession, that's like hitting a home run!

Last month, ACA hit a home run with the national conference, "Partnering With Parents." All of us there were inspired by our wonderful keynote speakers, Bob Ditter, Jay Frankel, Richard Louv, Marcia Tate, Wendy Mogel, Sam Abell, Faith Evans, and Alex Kotlowitz. They have set the bar high for future conferences with their insight and timely remarks. Many of our colleagues presented workshops at the conference, as well, which keep us informed and up to date on the latest trends and information. Congratulations to Gwynn Powell and her committee on a truly outstanding conference.

In addition, the Council of Delegates adopted new standards for accredited camps. After much discussion and input from the delegates, the National Standards Commission presented their recommendations which now become not only ACA's standards, but the accepted standards in the camp field. All of us owe the NSC our thanks for their multi-year work, resulting in an outstanding new document.

The national conference is also a time to recognize individuals in our association who have made significant contributions to the camp field and the association. It was a pleasure to see many of our colleagues honored with [ACA awards](#). The association's highest award, the Distinguished Service Award, was presented to Cindy Moore, outgoing chair of the National Standards Commission. In addition, we had the opportunity to honor Mary Ennis for her fifty-year tenure with ACA. Congratulations to the award recipients and thank you for giving of your time, talent, and service to the American Camp Association.

We now move on to the camp director's crunch time, spring. Throughout the country, facilities are being refreshed, programs are being expanded, and campers and staff are being recruited for the upcoming summer. In preparation for the summer, Stephen Wallace has shared with us a wonderful article about the "Social Networking" phenomenon that applies to campers and staff alike, and how this phenomenon affects camps.

Those of you who attended the national conference will utilize the information gained there as we move forward. ACA will continue to provide pertinent information such as Wallace's article throughout the year. The American Camp Association exists to benefit the public by providing such information to both the public and to practitioners, through not only our national conference, but also through ACA's ongoing communications, its Web site, www.ACAcamps.org, and through the twenty-four sections who administer the standards program and other activities. Check out all that ACA has done over the past year by clicking on [2005 Annual Report](#).

I hope you enjoy these days of spring in preparation for another great summer. With help from ACA in the form of training and knowledge, we should all expect a wonderful camp season, full of home runs!

Ann Sheets
ACA President

Current Research

Sign up for the Healthy Camp Initiative!

Did you know that 77.8 percent of fractures that occur at camp happen to campers (not staff) and 66.7 percent of those fractures happen to male campers? Before you start thinking guys are just a bunch of uncoordinated rowdies, you should know it is actually female campers and female staff that have the higher proportion of both illnesses and injuries at camp

(sorry gals)! Horseback riding and playing "Capture the Flag" are the two activities that result in the most injuries at camp, and the majority of adverse events among campers occur on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday afternoons.

This is the kind of feedback we received on our Healthy Camp Study pilot in 2005. We are pleased to announce that through generous funding from Markel Insurance Company, the study has been approved to continue for the next five years.

Want a Healthy Camp?

Do you want to know the best intervention strategies to keep your staff on the job and your campers in program and not in the health lodge? Do you want to see your health statistics in comparison to national averages?

Thanks to the generosity of Markel Insurance Company and the skills and systems of The Ohio State University College of Medicine (OSU); Columbus Children's Research Institute (CCRI); the American Camp Association (ACA); and the Association of Camp Nurses (ACN), we have a five-year opportunity to gather illness and injury data from camps (both ACA and non-ACA).

As a result of this study we want to:

- track camp illnesses and injuries;
- monitor trends in camp health;
- identify risk and protection factors; and
- track/analyze appropriate intervention strategies.

These strategies will make a proven difference in your camp's health awareness and performance!

Camps that have been serious about tracking illnesses and injuries over time have found ways to make significant reductions in the time campers and staff lose from program, have lowered their health costs, and provided very specific staff training on effective interventions.

What Is Expected of Participating Camps?

Beginning with the 2006 camp season, each participating camp will be asked to have a designated reporter collect information about the injuries and illnesses that meet the study's criteria for inclusion. Desired camp reporters are (listed in order of preference): the camp health care director, the camp nurse, other camp health care personnel (i.e., LPN, EMT, etc.), or another adult appointed by the camp administration. The camp's reporter will be asked to log onto the study Web site weekly throughout the summer season to provide exposure information (the number of campers and staff in the program) and incidence information (the number of campers or staff ill or injured and missing some portion of program time as a result). Camps in our Pilot Study (2005) spent approximately fifteen minutes per week completing reports.

To view Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and the enrollment form, please click on the following link. **Please submit your enrollment form by March 15.** Thank you!!

[Healthy Camp Study Enrollment Form](#)

If you are unable to get to the link or have additional questions, please contact Sheila Dannemiller at 765-349-3511 or sdannemiller@ACAcamps.org. Study information is also available at www.ACAcamps.org/research.

Learning Resources

2006 ACA National Conference—Recap

February 7-10, Sheraton Chicago

Partnering With Parents—The Conversation Continues!

More than 1100 registered participants gathered in Chicago for four plus, action-filled days. Programs began early and ended late in an effort to make the most of each day and to meet the learning needs of our diverse audience. From rousing keynotes, to touching moments with honored award recipients, this program delivered. Thanks to all who contributed by attending, participating in lively discussions, offering guidance to students, engaging exhibitors, leading sessions, volunteering, and supporting others by making funds available to attend this year's event. And for those who were unable to join us, we're very pleased to be sharing handouts and other resources for your professional development on our conference home page:

- [Speaker biographies \(PDF\)](#)
- [Presenter's handouts](#)
- [Awards presentations](#)
- [Exhibitor contact information](#)
- [Virtual Camp Store](#)

We've had many inquiries about access to the "Right Now" montage that aired at the Opening Keynote Event. This three-minute video, set to the tune of "Right Now" communicates the benefits of camp in an engaging and energizing way. We'll be making this available by the end of March for use by our camps and conferences. Special thanks to CAMP TV Media Inc. for an outstanding production.

We ended the program in Chicago with a beginning—our circle continues as we segue to planning the 2007 National Conference in Austin, Texas, February 13-15, "Widening the Circle." Are you interested in presenting? Have ideas regarding topics and/or presenters? Please contact Amy Katzenberger at ak Katzenberger@ACAcamps.org.

Take the Basic Camp Director Course (BCDC)

The BCDC provides the basics for camp directors with fewer than six years of experience or for seasoned program directors and site managers. This is an excellent opportunity to be sure you have a basic knowledge in the core areas and begin networking. BCDC trainings are scheduled in the following areas:

- Upstate New York • March 19-23, 2006
Sky Lake Center • Windsor, New York
Course Cost: \$275 ACA Member, \$325 Nonmember
Room and Board (includes linens): \$183.25 double or triple;
\$263.25 single (first-come, first-served basis)
- Illinois • April 2-6, 2006 Prior to the Mid States Conference
Camp Henry Horner • Ingleside, Illinois
Course Cost: \$275 ACA Member, \$325 Nonmember
Room and Board (includes linens): \$180 triple, \$210 double,
\$242 single (first-come, first-served basis)

For more information or to register, please visit www.ACAcamps.org/education or contact Laura Bennington at lbennington@ACAcamps.org or 765-342-8456, ext. 323.

Camping Magazine Special Discount—Learn from the Experts!

Leading youth development authorities share their expertise in the May/June issue of *Camping Magazine!*

- Greg Cronin—Staff Orientation
- Dr. Joel Haber—Bullying Prevention
- Jeffrey Leiken—7 Absolutes of Counseling
- Dr. Ethan Schafer—Managing the Challenges of Adolescence

Dr. Christopher Thurber—Homesickness Prevention
Stephen Wallace—Rites of Passage: Camp Pays Off

Special Discount for the May/June Staff Training Issue
\$1 per copy, plus shipping and handling, when ordering 10 or more.
To order, go to www.ACAcamps.org/campmag.

A perfect staff training tool for staff from the premier resource for camp professionals—*Camping Magazine*

Powerful and engaging reading for your camp staff at a discount.

4th Annual CLE (Continuing Legal Education) Conference—Tracking the Trends: Recreation & Adventure Program Law & Liability

Geared to attorneys, legal staff, board members, risk managers, insurance professionals, outdoor professionals, and anyone involved in providing recreation and adventure programs, the conference offers new insights regarding legal doctrines, operations issues in the legal liability context, industry standards and practices, and much more. For more information, visit www.cle.com.

To register:

Call in your registration to 800-873-7130.

Fax your registration form to 303-321-6320.

[E-mail your registration.](#)

[Register online.](#)

The Foundation for Jewish Camping Sponsors Leaders Assembly Conference

The conference will provide camp directors and staff with opportunities to learn how to improve their staff training, their marketing efforts, as well as their relationships with campers and their families. Highlights of the conference will include:

Attendees will learn from Lou Bergholz, who has developed a training model for camps such as Paul Newman's Hole in the Wall camps, about improving staff training.

Sessions dedicated to building a camp's alumni constituency through new software. Attendees will learn how to utilize this technological tool to help turn lapsed customers into faithful alumni.

A series of breakout sessions aimed at better equipping camp professionals to market and brand their camps in which attendees will learn from renowned brand experts, public relations professionals, seasoned retail executives and journalists. These sessions will inform camping professionals about placing their camp and programs in the media, upgrading their camps' brand while staying committed to their mission, developing creative programs to inspire employees, and growing their business by better understanding the consumer.

Attendees will learn how Jewish camps are responding to the burgeoning specialty camping market. Experts will speak about enhancing specialty programs, creating specialty tracks in daily schedules and launching post or pre season programs aimed at a single target audience.

For more information, visit www.jewishcamping.org.

Relevant Issues

Their Space . . . Or Yours? Internet Issues Come to Camp

Stephen G. Wallace, M.S., Ed.

The popularity of social networking sites, such as Myspace.com and Facebook.com, raise important issues for camp directors intent on protecting their campers—and their camps—from the dark side of the online world.

Traditional concerns about youth and the Internet took a high-tech turn with the advent of this new breed of the "local" hangout—places where young people post personal information often accompanied by pictures of themselves and their (perhaps unwitting) friends.

Free to all comers, such forums provide easy and anonymous access to anyone searching for e-mail addresses, cell phone numbers, or details about body type, sexual preferences, or alcoholic beverages of choice. And the information flow doesn't stop there. A recent *Dateline NBC* investigation of teen pages found scenes of binge drinking, apparent drug use, and sex acts.

So concerned are school officials that some are considering banning the posting of personal pages by their students. And so concerned are law enforcement officials that at least one state, Connecticut, is investigating the link between these sites and incidents of sexual assault.

Wiredsafety.org, an online safety, education, and help group, points out that while users sometimes share their personal information in order to find romance, this is not okay for kids. Indeed, the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* recently reported the arrest of a twenty-six-year-old California man on charges of felony child molestation of a fourteen-year-old he met on Myspace.com.

But child predators aren't the only problem—and harm to youth not the only risk.

A review of Myspace.com reveals "group" pages created by teens and incorporating the name, and sometimes the logo, of their school or camp. These virtual campfires allow for cyberbullying and the unsupervised exchange of often-inappropriate ideas and pictures that would never be tolerated within the confines of a classroom or cabin.

In some instances, content amounts to sexual innuendo and in others not-so-subtle sexual solicitation. Also featured are photos of kissing, fondling, and groping and dialogue about getting high, getting wasted, or just plain getting mad. And all of this under the banner of organizations committed to education, youth development, and safety.

A natural reaction might be to simply ban teen participation in online networking. But attempting to deny campers' access may not be the best approach—and may ultimately fail anyway. There are, however, other important steps we can take to keep our campers and our camps safe.

Keeping Campers and Camps Safe

So, what's a camp director to do?

- Establish and disseminate policies regarding the posting of personal information online.
- Prohibit the use of images (pictures or logos) of or from your camp.
- Visit the sites to monitor compliance.
- Notify campers and their parents about violations of your policy.
- Follow through with consequences.

Educating Parents and Teens

Camps can also play a valuable role in educating families about the threats posed by social networking sites. Wiredsafety.org offers some online safety guidelines for parents.

- Personal information stays personal.
- Make sure your child doesn't spend all of his or her time on the computer.
- Keep the computer in a family room, kitchen, or living room, not in your child's bedroom. Knowing you are watching, kids are less likely to put themselves in risky situations, and you can safely oversee what's going on.
- Learn enough about computers so you can enjoy them together with your kids.
- Watch your children when they're online and see where they go.
- Make sure that your children feel comfortable coming to you with questions.
- Keep kids out of chat rooms unless they are monitored.
- Discuss these rules, get your children to agree to adhere to them, and post them near the computer as a reminder.
- Help them find a balance between computing and other activities.
- Remember to monitor their compliance with these rules, especially when it comes to the amount of time your children spend on the computer.
- Get to know their "online friends" just as you get to know all of their other friends.
- Warn them that people may not be what they seem to be. Predators often pose as children to gain our children's trust.

Developing Protocols for Staff

Camps might also develop protocols for their staff, prohibiting, for example, any online exchange that would be considered a violation of existing personnel policies and the posting of any inappropriate information or photos that can be accessed by campers. Finally, camps may wish to consider using these sites as screening tools when hiring counselors.

Don Schroeder, an employment lawyer in the Boston office of Mintz Levin, says, "While you may not be able to keep people from doing what they want on the Internet, you can certainly take action if you don't like what you see," including dismissing, or not rehiring, any staff member found to be in violation of the policies you have created.

As with most things Internet, social networking sites offer content both bad and good. At worst, they perpetuate bawdy exhibitionism. At best, they provide a place for the meaningful exchange of creative ideas, memories, and dialogue, keeping young people connected to the friends and experiences that matter most.

In that way, your space is their space, too.

Stephen Wallace, M.S., Ed., has broad experience as a school psychologist and adolescent counselor. He serves as director of counseling and counselor training at the Cape Cod Sea Camps, chairman and CEO of SADD, and adjunct professor of psychology at Mount Ida College.

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An in-depth article on the complexities of social networking and its impact on the camp community will be published in the September/October 2006 issue of Camping Magazine.

The American Camp Association has set up an e-mail discussion group about the issues addressed in this article, and the myriad of other concerns raised with online social networking sites. To join in the discussion, simply sign up below:

New CPR Guidelines Coming This Spring from American Heart Association and American Red Cross

The American Heart Association and the American Red Cross have revised their guidelines for chest compressions in their Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation Courses, increasing the repetition from fifteen compressions for every two breaths to thirty compressions for every two breaths. The change in compressions will affect currently certified staff and staff receiving the updated training beginning in June. For more information, read the [Winter 2006 issue of The CampLine](#).

Association News

Annual Statements of Compliance

Camps who are seeking or renewing ACA accreditation will receive notice soon about submitting their 2006 Statements of Compliance, which confirm their compliance with applicable laws and codes and with ACA standards and ethics. Notices will be sent to ACA Liaisons, with the statements due back to ACA by mid-April. At this time, we are encouraging camps to sign and submit the Statement of Compliance electronically (link to www.acacamps.org/soc). Contact the standards department with questions, 800-428-2267, ext. 305.

International Best Practices

What are your responsibilities when incorporating international staff in your camp program? [Download a copy of International Best Practices](#) that contribute to the success of cultural exchange for you and your staff.

Camp Helen Brachman Celebrates 100 Years

The Children's Outing Association/Camp Helen Brachman in Almond, Wisconsin, has been providing continuous camp experiences for one hundred years. To learn about this camp's historical growth and discover other ACA camps that have celebrated centennials, visit ACA's [online Centennial Tribute to Camps](#). If your camp has celebrated or is celebrating its 100th anniversary, complete the online form to participate in this tribute.

The Latest Issues of Camping Magazine and The CampLine Are Now Online!

The [March/April 2006 issue](#) of *Camping Magazine* features articles on hurricane relief efforts within the camp community, strategic planning techniques, bullying prevention, camp enrollment study results, and more. The [Winter issue](#) of *The CampLine* covers ADA requirements, appropriate PFDs for various aquatic sports, and other important risk management issues.

Operation Sweet Feet

Thanks to ACA member, Phil Lilienthal, and an organization by the name of WorldCamps, African children now have the rare and privileged opportunity to attend camp in South Africa. Most of these campers are orphans and in need of shoes. While attending camp, these children get to pick out one pair of shoes that will last them for the entire year. If you would like to help put a pair of shoes on a child's sweet, little feet, we invite you to join us in Operation Sweet Feet.

Children's Ages:	Elementary to early high school
Items Needed:	Sneakers—new & gently used (please wash before donating), Socks
Sizes Needed:	Children's sizes 2-4 (not infant) & adult sizes 5-7 are most useful

More info: www.worldcamps.org (Camp Reports shares excellent insight). Camps are held in April, June, July, September, December, and January

Please ship your donation to:
Philip Lilienthal
WorldCamps
1606 Washington Plaza
Reston, VA 20190

Thank you!!!

Resources

A Community Guide to Helping Youth

Helping America's Youth, a Web site that helps youth workers assess the community's needs on behalf of children and youth. The new Web site and training program is available at www.helpingamericasyouth.org. The site's training guide offers ways to build partnerships within the community, assess needs and resources, and select program designs.

New Child Trends Report

Child Trends researchers analyzed twenty-six national data sources for their capacity to inform child health policy and practice in their efforts to promote early child development. They also provided recommendations for future data development.

The new Child Trends report, [Studying and Tracking Early Child Development from a Health Perspective: A Review of Available Data Sources](#) (PDF - 3MB), was funded through a grant by The Commonwealth Fund. It enables health researchers and policy communities to understand how national surveys measure up in the areas of health, health care receipt, socioemotional and intellectual development, family functioning and parent health, community characteristics, and child care and family demographics.

Membership: What's in it for you?

Media-Savvy Communications Toolkit Now Available to ACA Members

ACA has developed an online communications toolkit exclusively for ACA members and available on a password-protected page within ACA's Web site. The toolkit guides camps and staff through a variety of media relations issues, including a brief "media relations 101" overview covering the basics of media communications and terminology, steps in crisis communications, effective ways to generate story ideas, important tips for the media interview, and much more. Members can access the toolkit online from the members only area, www.ACACamps.org/members.

For information about ACA business partnerships and member savings, visit www.ACACamps.org/partners.

Quick Stats

Study Reveals Parents Need Better Cybersmarts

A survey commissioned by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) and Cox Communications reveals that, while nearly half of the parents surveyed monitor their children's online activity daily or weekly, the other half admit they don't even know that monitoring tools are available.

Other key findings:

Over half (51%) of parents either do not have or do not know if they have software on their computer(s) that monitors where their teenager(s) go online and with whom they interact.

42% of parents do not review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via instant messaging.

Teenagers who Instant Message use chat lingo to communicate and parents don't know the meanings of some of the most commonly used phrases. 57% don't know LOL (Laughing Out Loud), 68% don't know BRB (Be Right Back), and 92% don't know A/S/L (Age/Sex/Location).

95% of parents couldn't identify common chat room lingo that teenagers use to warn people they're chatting with that their parents are watching. Those phrases are POS (Parent Over Shoulder) and P911 (Parent Alert).

Nearly three out of 10 (28%) of parents don't know or are not sure if their teens talk to strangers online.

30% of parents allow their teenagers to use the computer in private areas of the house such as a bedroom or a home office. Parents say they are more vigilant about where their teen(s) go online if the computer is in a public area of the household.

58% of parents surveyed say they review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via Instant Messaging; 42% do not.