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Students  
working  
in  
ministry

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CAMP FOWLER

# We're Glad You're Here

As a Student Working in Ministry at Camp Fowler, you have a special opportunity to fill a role that no one else can. You are neither Staff nor Volunteer nor Camper, but a blend of all three. This gives you a unique set of responsibilities.

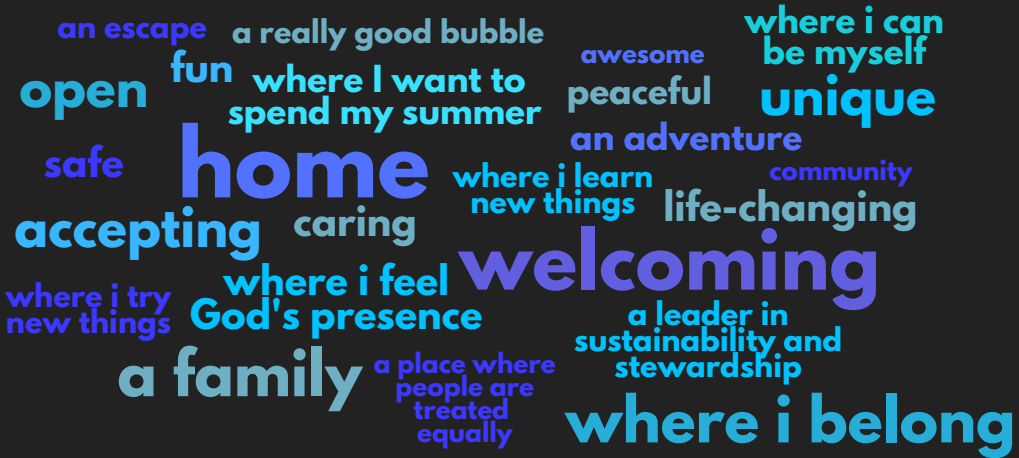
Your week as a SWiM is going to stretch you as a leader and grow you as a person. It will also present you with the unique opportunity to impact the lives of campers younger than you in an important and lasting way. It's a big responsibility and an awesome privilege.

Are you ready?



According to  
our community,

# fowler is...



Camp Fowler has been playing with the idea of Summer Camp since 1954. Though our programs and model have shifted and morphed since then, we have stayed true to our core philosophy of hospitality and welcome. We combine the skills and passion of volunteers, staff, clergy, and non-profit organizations to help more children experience the wonder of camp.

We are guided by three core values that we strive to make visible in everything we do:

## community

To understand the Christian faith and what it means to be in the body of Christ, we must have solid examples of what community looks and feels like. We witness the image of God in one another through fellowship and interdependence.

## simplicity

In an age of ever increasing speed and technology, opportunities to "be still and know that I am God" will become even more important. We strive to provide space for children and adults to be wholly present, with body, soul and mind.

## caring for the world

Our response to God's presence is always one of thanks and care: for the people who stand beside us and for the world in which we live. Together, we are learning to love outside of ourselves, which we believe will make the world a better place.

# by the numbers

**800**

campers served  
each summer

**8**

weeks of camp  
offered each  
summer

**25%**

of our campers  
come from low  
SES families

**5**

year  
round  
staff

**25**

seasonal  
staff

**150**

volunteers  
support our  
ministry each  
summer

**5**

winterized  
buildings to host  
retreats, weddings,  
and more all year  
long

**15**

non-profit organizations that we partner with to provide opportunities for more children and young adults to come to camp. These include: the RCA, PCUSA, UCC, The Lower East Side Girl's Club, Perfect Ten of Hudson, Community Hospice, Al-Hidaya Mosque, Parque Camp, Adirondack Wild, Hope College, Skidmore College, Anderson University, and more

**20%**

of our campers  
are racial  
minorities

# Snapshot:

what it looks like to be a SWiM at Camp Fowler



Your primary responsibility is to make sure the campers have a great week at camp! You're there to make their week better first and foremost, although we're pretty sure you'll have fun too!



You will be assigned to a specific cabin to work with during your SWiM week. You will assist the cabin counselor in caring for all the campers in your cabin. You have the unique opportunity to get to know this small group of campers well.



During the day, you will help support the summer Staff. You will spend at least one day during your SWiM week assisting Staff either in the Kitchen or on Maintenance. This is an important aspect of Camp for you to experience.



Most days, you will be assigned to a specific session you will be responsible for helping a Staff member lead. This could be anything from a low ropes session to a canoe trip to an arts session. Staff will help you take lead on some aspects of the session, especially if you indicate that you want to help.



One of the most unique things about being a SWiM is your ability to connect with campers. Because you are closer in age to them, they will look up to you and watch what you do. Make an effort to really get to know the campers. Listen to them and play with them.



You will grow as a leader and as a person throughout your SWiM week. You will also come away with 40 hours of community service. Take advantage of this opportunity to hone your leadership skills and ask questions of the Staff and Volunteers. They have a lot to teach!

# staff and volunteer conduct standards

adapted from the American Camp Association\*

*Fowler Camp and Retreat Center is committed to ensuring all campers are treated with respect and care for their physical, emotional, and spiritual safety. At all times, the Staff and Volunteers of Fowler Camp and Retreat Center are expected to respect and protect the boundaries and rights of all campers. Any violation of the guidelines set forth in this policy will result in disciplinary action, including the possible termination of your employment at Camp Fowler. Fowler will cooperate with appropriate legal authorities and will pursue prosecution of any Staff Member or Volunteer who engages in any illegal activity with any camper or adult under Fowler's care.*

## Guidelines for Staff Behavior

Staff and Volunteers will...

- Serve as positive role models for all campers
- Prioritize the safety (physical, emotional, and spiritual) of all campers
- Wear clothing that is appropriate to public interaction with children
- Set limits with children who "cling" or hang on them
- Set boundaries with campers who may develop "infatuations" with them
- Avoid using sexually explicit language, making suggestive comments, swearing, or demeaning others in front of Campers
- Shower only in buildings where Campers are not showering
- Sit on and sleep only in their own bed and not allow any campers to sit on their bed.
- Obtain explicit consent from camper's legal parent or guardian before contacting them via phone, email, or social media

Staff and Volunteers will not...

- Look to campers for emotional support
- Call campers derogatory names
- Haze campers in any way
- Be alone with a camper in any place where they cannot be seen by another adult
- Share their romantic lives with campers under any circumstances
- Enter cabins other than their own without explicit permission from the cabin's counselor or in the case of an emergency
- Tickle or tease campers
- Force a relationship with a camper
- Become overly involved in the conversations campers have about romantic relationships
- Unduly influence campers with their own personal beliefs
- Engage in horseplay or overly competitive activities with campers

## Guidelines for Discipline of Children

- Staff and Volunteers will not, under any circumstances, hit or cause intentional physical harm to a child
- Staff and Volunteers will not use abusive or derogatory language with campers
- Staff and Volunteers should use appropriate caution if they need to restrain a camper
- Staff and Volunteers are to ask for help from other Staff and/or supervisory Staff if they are unable to provide appropriate disciplinary measures as outlined in this section

## Guidelines for Camper-Adult Contact

The following guidelines should be followed when touching campers:

- Never touch a camper against their will (unless in the case of clear and present danger to the child)
- Never touch a camper if they demonstrate discomfort, either verbal or non-verbal
- Only give Sideways Hugs to Campers
- Only touch a child in the presence of other adults
- Never engage in sexual activity of any kind with a Camper
- Never touch a place on a child's body that is normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only with supervision from another adult
- The best places provide physical contact to a child are on the hand, shoulder, or upper back.

*Staff and Volunteers must understand that there is a clear power difference between themselves and campers. Inappropriate sexual contact with or physical abuse of a camper can have severe emotional and psychological effects on that camper that can last a lifetime.*

## Mandatory Reporting

Fowler Camp and Retreat Center is a mandatory reporter of any abuse, observed, proven, or suspected toward any child under the care of the Camp. Please report any abuse or suspicions of abuse to the Supervisory Staff.

## Guidelines for Interactions with Other Adults

- Watch for signs of stress in yourself and in your fellow Staff and Volunteers
- Step in when other Staff or Volunteers appear to be at risk of hurting or abusing campers
- Model appropriate adult-to-adult reactions that are free of derogatory comments, inappropriate language, or flirting
- Interacting with campers should take priority over engaging with other adults.
- Remember that campers watch everything you do and they are influenced by their observations.

*By adhering to these standards, Staff and Volunteers at Camp Fowler are able to ensure that a safe and healthy environment is available for all campers, allowing the focus of our attention to be directed toward their individual needs.*

# SWiM Rules & Regulations

*As a SWiM, you have a unique role in the Fowler community. You are neither camper nor staff nor cabin counselor, but a blend of all three. Because of this, there are certain procedures you must abide by and follow:*

- 1** SWiMs are expected to follow and abide by the same Conduct Standards as our Volunteers and Staff.
- 2** SWiMs must be with their cabin from evening vespers until breakfast the next day.
- 3** Showering must take place between 6:00-6:30am. SWiMs are not allowed to be in the same shower houses as campers. Because of this, you must shower before the Campers are allowed to be in the shower houses.
- 4** SWiMs may run at 5:45am if they wish to do so before showering. You may run to the sign at the end of Pelcher Rd. and back. You must make arrangements with your cabin counselor beforehand.
- 5** SWiMs may have one hot beverage per day (coffee, hot chocolate, or tea).
- 6** Unless they are working in the Kitchen or on Maintenance, SWiMs are expected to be where the campers are at all times.



# camper covenant

*Each camper agrees to follow these rules. As a SWiM, you can gently help make sure the campers are successful in doing so.*

I agree to follow these rules in order to make sure that everyone, including myself, has a safe and fun week at Camp Fowler.

I understand and I will follow the Fowler Safety Plan (French Louie Drill) in the event of an emergency.

I agree to leave my cell phone, tablet, E-Reader, smart watch, computer, and/or iPod at home. I will turn it into a Staff Member today if I have it here.

I agree to take care of the trees, rocks, and the natural world around me. I will not pick or destroy living things.

I will not swim if the Beach is not open and/or a lifeguard is not present.

I will take care of my cabin so that others may enjoy it after me. I will participate in daily cabin clean ups. I will not graffiti the building or raid other cabins.

I know where the hazards around Camp are: the rocks along the water, the beach, and the boundaries of where I am allowed to go. I will avoid these things to stay safe.

I understand the Buddy System and I will use it any time I am swimming or traveling around Camp.

I will wear shoes everywhere except in the Cabins, the Chapel, and on the Beach.

I will report any broken equipment to a Staff or a Cabin Counselor immediately.

I am familiar with the camp layout. If I get lost, I will stay where I am and wait for a Staff Member to find me.

I agree to stay on Camp property unless I get the Director's approval to leave.

I will participate in all planned activities to the best of my ability.

I understand that smoking, alcohol, and drugs are not allowed at Camp Fowler and I know all medications must be with the Nurse.

I understand that campfires may only be built in designated areas and they must be supervised by a Fowler Staff Member.

I agree not to hurt people physically or verbally if I am having a problem. If I have an issue, I will talk to the Director, the Assistant Director, or the Nurse.

# packing list

## clothes:

- Rain Jacket
- Warm sweater or jacket
- Bathing suit (one piece please)
- Comfortable clothing that is appropriate for active days
- One set of clothes that can get dirty (for Kitchen/Maintenance)
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Nice outfit for Worship

## shoes:

- Closed-toed shoes for the kitchen
- Sneakers or shoes that tie
- Shoes that can get wet  
(crocs, tevas, chacos, keens, etc.)

## please avoid bringing:

Fans - Each cabin is equipped with an overhead ceiling fan and we believe there is value in falling asleep listening to natural nighttime sounds

Electronics - We are a screen free camp. Tablets, computers, E-Readers, smart watches, iPods, and phones are not permitted. As a SWiM, you should set a good example by not having these items with you.

## misc:

- Bible
- Journal/Pen
- Toiletries
- Beach Towel
- Bath Towel
- Shoes for the Shower
- Camera (optional)
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Watch
- Flashlight
- Backpack
- Sleeping Bag
- Fitted Twin Sheet
- Pillow

# sessions

how to participate  
as a SWiM

Sessions are a great opportunity for you to learn what it looks like to work as a Staff Member at Camp Fowler. Whether you are helping lead a canoe trip or assisting on an arts session, you have the opportunity to really be a leader. Take the opportunity to learn from the Staff leading the session to hone your own leadership skills

## some tips for SWiMs on sessions

### ask questions

The Staff member leading the session is a wealth of knowledge! Ask them questions! Why are they doing what they're doing? How do they know where you're going? What do you do if a camper gets hurt? What does it look like to be a leader at Camp Fowler?

### engage

Sessions are all about the campers: keeping them safe, maintaining their interest, and helping them learn. Really work to engage the campers in whatever activity you are doing. Seek out the camper on the fringes, ask campers about their experience, etc.

### jump right in

If you notice something that needs to happen, jump in and do it! Do kids need a game to entertain them? Does someone need to go to the nurse? You can make that happen!

### be flexible

Canoeing may not be your favorite thing in the whole world. That might be true for the camper sitting next to you too. However, if you are able to model what it looks like to have a good attitude about a session, the campers will learn that they can do that too. Be flexible and go where you're needed, you just might learn something

### be a servant

These sessions are not about you--they're about the campers. If you can remember that, you will have a more positive experience!

# Kitchen & Maintenance

Two of the most critical aspects of camp are Kitchen and Maintenance. Without healthy, quality food and safe facilities, we can't run camp! In order to get a well rounded understanding of what it looks like "behind the scenes" at Fowler, all SWiMs will spend at least one day helping the Staff in the Kitchen or on Maintenance.

## *In the Kitchen you will...*

- Work with the Cooks and Kitchen Volunteers
- Help with meal preparation tasks
- Help with Kitchen cleaning tasks
- Help serve the meals during the day
- Learn about the process that allows us to feed up to 180 people food that is healthy, whole, and delicious

**Make sure to wear close-toed shoes and a hat or bandana**

## *On Maintenance you will...*

- Work with the Maintenance Staff and Maintenance Volunteers
- Help with rounds (cleaning Fenimore, Shower Houses, Cabin bathrooms)
- Help with daily maintenance projects
- Learn about the work that goes into keeping our facilities and grounds functioning and safe.

**Make sure to wear shoes and clothes that can get dirty**

# a guide to mealtimes

*At Camp Fowler, meals are sacred. Our philosophy of hospitality, community, simplicity, and caring for the world are perhaps most evident in our meals. We practice hospitality by making space for anyone who happens to be at Camp while we are eating--there's always enough. We practice community by eating together and passing food around the table. We practice simplicity by serving good, whole food without a lot of hoopla and fanfare. And we practice caring for the world by sourcing our food as locally as possible and composting the majority of our food waste.*

*At Camp Fowler, our food is an extension of our theology.*

## Here are some things that are helpful to know about meal times at Fowler:

### jumpers

Jumpers allow the process of eating to be less chaotic. They arrive early to help set all the tables and then they eat before everyone else. This allows them to serve food during meals. In the middle of a meal, if your table needs something, someone should raise their hand and a jumper will come over to ask what you need. They will take your dish and bring you back what you ask for. It is helpful if you can provide them with a quantity (i.e. we need 4 pancakes, please!) to ensure we aren't wasteful.

### trivia

We do trivia before every meal to help prevent a mad rush into the Dining Hall. Campers will line up in a straight line off the porch and raise their hands to answer the questions asked by the Staff. When they are called on and answer a question correctly, your whole cabin may go inside. As a SWiM, you should wait with your campers until they go in. If you would like to help with Trivia, ask a Staff member!

### thank you for this food

We say a grace collectively as a community before we eat. This act of gratitude is important to us as we strive to remember where our food comes from and how it got on the plate in front of us. Please help us by making sure that the campers do not start eating until after the grace. If the meal is buffet style, the grace will be said outside. If it is served family style, the grace will be said once everyone is seated. Jumpers typically lead the grace.

### there's enough to go around

One of the ways our philosophy shows up at meal times is in our belief that if everyone takes a fair share, there will be enough to go around. We know that children often come from competitive environments where food is scarce. Part of what we want to show them at Fowler is that if they take just enough, there will be enough for everyone to have some. As a SWiM you can help enforce this perspective by making sure all dishes go all the way around the table before you ask for more.

## no thank you helpings

Camp is a great place to try new things, and that includes new food! We do not offer "alternatives" if campers think they don't like what is being served. There will always be a breakfast bar with fruit and yogurt in the mornings and most lunches and dinners will also have a salad bar available. We urge campers to take a "no thank you helping" if they think they might not like what is being served. They might find they actually like something they thought they wouldn't.

## one at a time

In order to prevent long lines and chaos, we ask that only one person per table go up to the Breakfast/Salad bar or up to get seconds from the buffet at a time. You, as a SWiM, should make sure the campers get the chance to go up to the breakfast bar or the salad bar first, before you go up there.

## start with a little bit

We try to help campers be mindful about their food: where it comes from, who prepared it, how it tastes, what happens to it when they don't finish it. One of the ways we suggest doing this is by starting with a little bit, with the understanding that you can always ask for more. This prevents the "eyes are bigger than the stomach" phenomenon and results in less waste. You, as a SWiM, can be helpful by making gentle suggestions that your campers start with a small portion.

## clearing the table

Jumpers, staff, SWiMs, and cabin counselors should be the only people clearing tables. In order to make it easier on the people clearing, each table should stack and sort their dishes and leftover food. Plates should be in one stack, cups should be in stacks of 5, silverware should be all together on a plate, and any leftover food should be sorted on different plates to be composted or thrown away. Food that remains in the serving dishes should stay there and not be sorted with the compost. All the dishes can be stacked at the end of the table for those clearing to pick up.

## after meal songs

Staff will always lead an after meal song once it starts to feel like most people are done eating. This gets everyone up on their feet and away from the tables so staff can finish clearing them. If you are willing to help staff clear tables while the campers are singing that would be very helpful. After meal songs also serve the purpose of allowing kids to be silly and uninhibited for a moment. You can ask a Staff member if you want to help lead an after meal song.

## oo ohh ort report

After all the tables are cleared, we will do our Ort Report. There's a little song that we always sing to announce it's about to happen. Staff will share how much food we collectively had leftover and encourage the community to try to get less ort for the next meal. To reiterate, ort should not be something that causes campers to be shamed, but rather a teaching tool about food mindfulness. As a SWiM, you should help prevent this "leftover shaming" and never participate in it yourself.

## after meal meds & dismissal

After the ort report, campers should remain seated until they are dismissed. Often, there will be campers who need to take their meds at the health center after a meal. A staff member will read the list of campers who needs to do so and dismiss them to go to the health center. Then the other campers will be released by cabin. Please help make sure campers remain seated until they are dismissed.

# discipline tips

*Discipline issues arise as a result of something. Your role as a SWiM is to do your best to try to understand where the issue is coming from and address that underlying need. All discipline issues should be handled with the utmost care; compassion toward the camper is the primary goal. Please note that most disciplining of campers will fall to the responsibility of Staff and Volunteers.*

## level i

**used in response to the first time an issue arises or to minor issues**

- Give affirmation for positive behavior
- Use appropriate touch when disciplining
- Kneel down to make eye contact with the Camper when disciplining
- Give choices--ex). you can make your bed alone or I can help you
- Make an agreement--ex). if you do this for me, I will do that for you
- Reassure--ex). I bet you can sweep the cabin really fast!
- State your expectation and detach when the camper resists

## level ii

**for repeated behavior of minor or mid-level issues**

- Take the camper aside and ask them why they are acting that way
- Allow consequences for failure (when campers are testing limits, not when safety is an issue)
- Speak with entire group
- Generalize--ex). sometimes when i'm hungry, it's hard for me to listen
- Challenge--ex). I challenge you to clean that up in 3 minutes
- Use cool off periods
- Ask a camper to come sit near you for a while
- Give pointers about how to behave appropriately

## level iii

**used for repetitive behavior and campers who are not responding to discipline efforts**

- Level iii disciplinary actions should be done only in consultation of the Assistant Director or Director.
- Bring the camper to the Assistant Director or Director
- Put together a clear contract with the camper about what is expected of them. Be specific about expected behaviors, understanding their needs, potential consequences and rewards, time frames, and a signature from both you and the camper
- Have the camper call his or her parent with the permission of the Director

## level iv

**only after careful consideration of circumstances and multiple failed efforts at discipline**

- The camper goes home. This decision can only be made by the Director.

*A common mistake is getting into a power struggle with the camper. An analogy is a tug of war. If the child starts to pull the "rope" by acting out, the best reaction you can have is to "let go of the rope" and not grow angrier and more frustrated.*

# questions to ask campers

**"WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS WEEK AND WHY?"**

**"WHAT'S SOMETHING NEW THAT YOU LEARNED OR SAW TODAY?"**

**"WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING/ EXCITING PART OF YOUR SESSION?"**

**"WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED ABOUT OR LEARNED IN DISCOVERY TIME THIS WEEK?"**

**"WHAT ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU HAVE ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE HEARING IN DISCOVERY TIME?"**

**"HOW IS CAMP DIFFERENT THAN HOME OR SCHOOL?"**

**"WHAT'S SOMETHING FUNNY THAT YOU HEARD OR SAW THIS WEEK?"**

**"WHICH AFTER MEAL SONG BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PERSONALITY?"**

**"WHAT LESSONS OR PRACTICES FROM THIS WEEK MIGHT YOU WANT TO BRING HOME WITH YOU?"**



# Reflections

for before and after your week as a SWiM

Before...

- What are three things you hope to learn from your week as a SWiM?
- What talents, skills, or personality traits do you have that will be helpful for your week as a SWiM?
- What is one goal you have for your SWiM week? Goals should be simple, specific and measurable.
- What is one leadership skill you hope to work on during your SWiM week? How might you do that?
- What are two ways you can remind yourself to make space for God during your SWiM week?
- What knowledge, skills, or understanding do you want to make sure your campers take home with them at the end of the week? How can you make that happen?
- What questions do you hope to have answered about Camp, faith, or leadership? Who might you ask?

After...

- Reflect back on the three things you hoped to learn. Did you learn them? If so, how? If not, why? What else did you learn that you didn't expect to?
- What did you notice about the different ways that the Staff and Volunteers demonstrated leadership? Make a list of the different qualities of a good leader that you saw demonstrated this week.
- You just spent a whole week with children. After that experience, how would you answer the question: "What do children need?"
- Where did you see God moving or sense God's presence this week?
- Describe the things you think you did well this week.
- How was being a SWiM different than being a camper?

# Tips for SWIMs

## If it rains, let it

Most of our programming will continue as planned, even in the rain.

If you see rain as a neutral environmental factor and keep your focus on the campers and the activity in front of you, the rain isn't such a big deal. Rain is a gift. You can be a role model of this mindset.

## Make space for God

We don't want you to leave Camp "burned out." One way to help prevent that is by putting God first. This practice has a way of helping everything else to fall into place. Take some time in the morning or evening to journal or have some quiet time. Making space for God is what helps facilitate the "ministry" part of your work as a SWIM.

## Watch and Learn

Between the staff and volunteers, you have a lot of great leaders to learn from.

Watch them. What do they do to get people's attention? How do they handle conflict? What does their leadership style look like? You can learn a lot from watching. If you have questions, ask!

## You're on stage

Campers are always watching you; this is both a big responsibility and an awesome privilege. They take the lead from you on energy, behavior, and attitude; be a good steward of that attention.

## Don't talk about people, talk to them

One thing that will destroy a community faster than anything is gossip. Camp can be stressful and under these circumstances, gossip can be more tempting and more damaging. If you have a problem with another person, talk with them one on one. If you cannot find a resolution, ask an outside third party adult to help facilitate a conversation. Don't talk about people, talk to them.

## Make "I've never done it that way before" your motto

Too often those words are used negatively--make them positive! Walk a different way to the Dining Hall; think of a new game or song to teach; come up with a new twist on an evening program. If you have an idea, share it!