

Mandatory Annual Training Topics for RFK Camps

Many older camps have returning volunteers who have “heard it all”. Those Directors ask us, what topics are required each year. The required time for **new volunteers is 12 hours** and **returning volunteers is 8 hours**. But what are the required topics within those 12 and 8-hour segments?

For **new volunteers** ALL the topics in the 101 Counselor Staff Training Manual (CSTM) are relevant and need to be covered. This is usually accomplished through a mixture of the following:

- Volunteers reading / review time covered by the signature page at the beginning of the manual.
- New Volunteer training that camps usually provide in a 4-hour session just for new volunteers.
- As part of the group training that usually includes returning volunteers.
- The Camp 4-hour Online Orientation will cover all of the topics. New volunteers will only need the remaining 8-hours with group training and details about local camp concerns, annual themes, facility issues, etc.

Below is the CSTM table of contents with the mandatory topics in **bold** and or **blue** followed by notes giving greater explanation.

There are no specific times listed for covering the mandatory topics. Camps may spend a lot of time on these mandatory topics if it’s needed but must spend some time discussing these topics.

For mandatory topics that are taught every year, we suggest you have different people teach those sections so you get a different perspective each year.

RFK Camp Counselor/Staff Training Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction to RFK Camp

- A. Overview
 - a. RFKC Beginnings
 - b. Intro to Training and RFKC Mission Statement
 - c. Who's Who — Job Descriptions
- B. Spiritual Foundation
 - a. **Teachable Moments**

Each year review **Teachable Moments**. Not necessarily these specific pages, but the topic of **Teachable Moments**; how can your team discover or create or share teachable moments with the children? Faith Integration is another term. How do volunteers integrate their faith like Jesus did?

II. Building a Mission Mindset and Self-Awareness

- A. A Successful Camp Experience Starts with God
- B. Understanding How One's Experience of Abuse/Neglect Can Affect Them
- C. Understanding Volunteer Rules, Roles and Responsibilities

There are no specific pages that must be covered, but the topic must be covered. Where are the volunteers in their spiritual walk? Are they spiritually ready to serve at camp this summer? If they are struggling, do they need prayer; have they suffered a spiritual set back this year that might affect their ability to serve? Volunteers cannot pour out if they are on empty. Cover some of the manuals content or create similar material so that volunteers are "spiritually prepared for camp."

III. Building Awareness of Abuse & Neglect

- A. Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect
 - a. Neglect
 - b. Physical Abuse
 - c. Sexual Abuse
 - d. Emotional Abuse
 - e. Other Types of Abuse & Neglect
- B. Child Abuse Statistics
- C. Behaviors Associated with Various Types of Abuse
- D. Child Trauma

There are no specific pages that must be covered, but the topic must be covered. This topic concerns where the children have come from or what they have been through. This topic may be incorporated into Section 6 on Behavior. It can also be covered within TBRI training or other types of specialty training. Decide what specific areas of abuse or associated behaviors the volunteers deal with the most. Have a person, a film, an outside speaker or an activity that addresses that area of abuse or behavior.

IV. Building Awareness of the Camper

- A. Similarities & Differences
- B. Accelerated Development
- C. Child Resiliency
- D. Supplemental Developmental Material

There are no specific pages that must be covered, but the topic of child resiliency should always be covered in this respect. Continue to find ways to help the volunteers understand that the children are not broken vessels destined for jail or homelessness. We know they have come from hard places; we must also know that we can help change the trajectory of their lives. This should be an inspirational time of hope in the training. It can be covered within these pages of the manual, or cover the topic of resiliency with an inspirational film, a testimony from a former camper, Foster Parent, Social Worker, or veteran volunteers who have personally been around long enough to tell the story of success they have seen in former campers

V. Understanding Behaviors & Camp Rules

- A. Communication Skills
 - a. Listening
 - b. Diffusing Anger
- B. Sensitivity Skills
 - a. Social Stages
 - b. Greeting — Getting Acquainted With Your Camper
- C. Safety Issues
 - a. [Reporting Abuse](#)
 - b. Medical Issues/HIV/AIDS
 - c. [Camp Rules & Religious Policies](#)

Diffusing anger and getting acquainted are usually appropriate topics to discuss. The **camp rules, reporting abuse and religious policies** all **must be covered each year as they are mandatory!!!** How to keep it fresh? Cover the pages straight out of the book or make it a game like family feud, have small table discussions, CPP videos from the RFK National Office or off the web, a guest speaker from law enforcement, Social Services or similar. Discuss options for sharing your faith while still in compliance with the religious policies, review evangelism through relationships.

VI. Behavior Management Techniques (being renamed Behavior Concerns)

- A. Modeling Appropriate Behavior
 - a. Why Behavior Management
 - b. Puffs and Praise
 - c. Attitudes Toward Food and Mealtimes
 - d. Setting Limits
- B. Handling Inappropriate Behavior
 - a. Natural and Logical Consequences
 - b. Time Out, 1-2-3 Magic, etc.
- C. Tools to use

There are no specific pages that must be covered, but the topic is **always relevant**. How will volunteers deal with behavioral issues? TBRI will cover it very well or other types of specialty training. Decide what specific areas of abuse or associated behaviors the volunteers deal with the most. Have a person, a film, an outside speaker or an activity that addresses that area of abuse or behavior. TBRI materials are specific to this topic.

VII. Team Development and Team Unity

- A. Team Development
- B. Necessity of Team Unity
 - a. [Team Unity](#) Starts with Each Volunteer
 - b. Camp Director will Focus Team Efforts on Unity of Purpose
 - c. The Challenge of Diversity in Volunteers
 - d. Willing to Change Makes Camp Successful

- e. [A Servant's Attitude Knits Volunteer Souls & Teams Together](#)
- f. [Volunteer Team Unity During Camp Week](#)
- g. [Volunteer Team Unity After Camp Week](#)

There are no specific pages that must be covered, but the topic is **always relevant**. Team building and team development are crucial to the success of camp. Much of the material in Section 7 is still very relevant and can be covered often and in various ways. To change it up, it's simple enough to add other team building activities, of which there are thousands. The key is to always **drive the activity back to how it helps volunteers be more successful at camp**. It may be an activity that helps volunteers be more successful interacting with the campers, but it should be designed for the adults interacting with other adults and working as a team.

VIII. The Week at Camp

A. [Getting Ready for Camp](#)

- a. [Dress Code](#)
- b. [Items to Bring](#)
- c. [Attitude](#)
- d. [Policies Review](#)
- e. [Schedule](#)

B. [Ownership](#)

- a. [Bibles](#)
- b. [What's in a Name](#)
- c. [T-shirts](#)

C. [What Happens at Camp?](#)

- a. [Sunday](#)
- b. [Monday](#)
- c. [Tuesday – Thursday](#)
- d. [Friday](#)
- e. [Camp Schedule](#)
- f. [Special Events](#)
- g. [Activity Centers](#)
- h. [Going Home from Camp](#)
- i. [Debrief Session](#)
- j. [Welcome Home Dinner](#)

Each year, part of training should cover getting ready and what happens, or what is new and what is different at camp this summer. Has there been a change of locations, or schedules? What is the theme; the curriculum, the drama, the verse of the week and how will the volunteers help reinforce those items with the campers. This should be an exciting part of the training because it's fresh and new each year. Having the Drama Coordinator, or Bible Teacher present their parts and how to reinforce it will bring fresh voices to the training. Breaking into small groups or table groups and discussing the materials is a great way to change things up and keep returning volunteers involved.

IX. Addendum Chapter (Maximizing the Impact)

The following is not "required" but is very helpful.

-Maximizing the Impact of Your Week with Campers

A guide for Brand New Volunteers, but useful for Experienced Volunteers too!

This section is not mandatory, but this material was designed for returning volunteers to have a different perspective of the existing materials. Review and see how it can be used to keep things fresh and relevant.