

## WMFC Volunteer Training

### 1. Two basic guidelines:

- Confidentiality is paramount. Please keep what you learn about a person to yourself.
- Think of the chronological age of the person you are escorting and act accordingly.

### 2. Avoid these terms.

handicapped	emotionally disturbed
retarded	case, client, or patient
crippled	slow
deaf and dumb	infirm
mentally different	unfortunate
autistic	“suffers from”
epileptic	“victim of”
diseased	wheelchair-bound

### 3. Use people first language.

- Instead of “disabled person,” say “person with disabilities”
- Instead of “special needs person,” say “person with special needs”

Now you try.

- Instead of “wheelchair-bound person,” say
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- Instead of “autistic person,” say
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Always put the person first and should not be defined by a disability. First and foremost, we are all children of God. We are all people with feelings and emotions and should be treated with respect and dignity.

### 4. Communication tips.

- Ask your camper how he or she wants to be addressed, then speak to the camper as you would anyone else who is the same age.
- Make small talk with your camper if possible. Ask about interests, hobbies, school, work, and family.
- Offer assistance. When your offer is accepted, ask how to best assist.
- Offer a handshake, even if person has limited mobility in a limb.
- If speaking through an interpreter, speak to the person, not the interpreter.
- Ask parents about communication devices.
- Ask permission before moving adaptive or medical equipment. Don't lean on wheelchairs.
- Ask permission before interacting with a service animal.
- When speaking to a person with a visual disability, start by identifying yourself and any people with you.
- Be patient if your camper has trouble understanding you. Avoid frustration or raising your voice.

#### 5. Safety and hygiene tips.

- Take cues about your role in feeding campers from parents. Eat meals with camper and camper's family if possible.
- Check with parents about how or if to move your camper to and from a wheelchair.
- Parents only assist children with dressing, application of bug spray and sunscreen.
- Encourage sanitation. Wash hands frequently, especially if your camper is medically fragile.
- If your child is a runner, always be where back up is available. Always have cell phone. If child runs, ask for help from volunteers around you. Then call security and staff member.
- In case of an accident, contact camp doc or nurse immediately. Then notify a staff member so an incident report can be completed.

- Seizure information

## 6. How to prevent and handle awkward situations.

- Ask for help if you sense a situation will become uncomfortable. Get a staff member for back up. They will decide if parent need to be contacted.
- Watch for signs of overstimulation: rocking, yelling, screaming, crying, fidgeting, fearful expression, aggressive behavior.
- If you observe any of those behaviors, redirect your camper to a quieter location.
- Keep your composure and speak kindly and calmly at all times.
- Make sure you and your camper are always where at least one other person can see you.
- Maintain physical boundaries with your camper. Only parents or the camp nurse will toilet or diaper their children, except in the nursery. Never be in a room alone with your camper.
- Be a friend to your camper, but do not encourage your camper to view you as a boyfriend or girlfriend.

## 6. Social Media Protocol

- Do not take pictures of your camper.
- Don't post anything to social media about your camper.
- Do be in pictures families take of you and your buddy.
- No texting or phone calls while on duty except in case of emergency.

**Kim and Jolene had hoped to do some Facebook Live discussions with volunteers ahead of camp, but the timing just hasn't worked out.**