



Programs Serving Minors Roundtable & Training

Case Study Analysis

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"Creating A More Educated Georgia"

Case Studies
With Comments
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The below scenarios, or ones similar to them, have occurred on college campuses. These scenarios are presented to you for discussion and analysis. There is not necessarily a “right” or “wrong” answer for each scenario. Rather, the scenarios are an opportunity to analyze and discuss best practices and reasonable responses to the facts presented.

Scenario #1 Friendly Music Instructor

In your job as a Youth Protection Coordinator at your institution, you are responsible for approving and ensuring the proper registration of all camps, clinics, and programs serving non-student minors. Due to your position you are often asked for advice regarding camp issues. This morning one of the Camp Directors informs you that:

Spencer is a music instructor at a summer camp for the musical arts on your campus. Spencer is very energetic and enthusiastic about music. Spencer arrives early and stays late to help the campers. Spencer is well-known and respected in the community for his musical abilities and for working with underprivileged kids. Spencer takes pride in getting campers to “come out of their shell”.

Another instructor noticed that Spencer gives extra attention to one of the campers and coaches her away from the group. This camper is also aware that Spencer texts this camper notes of encouragement.

1. What steps should the Camp Director take?
2. Does it matter if the Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct prohibits counselor and instructors from contacting camp participants through social media or text messages?
3. What other facts or circumstances would be relevant?
4. Do you think Spencer should be mentored in how to properly interact with campers or did he fail to make himself equally available to all campers and create a special relationship with this camper requiring his removal from the program?

Comments:

1. Staff and volunteers must abide by the Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct. Instructors and counselors should make themselves equally available to all participants and should avoid creating special friendships.

2. Staff should not be communicating with campers outside of established protocols and should not be communicating independently with campers on social media or by text messages.
3. This is a serious violation of the rules and should be dealt with formally.

Scenario #2 Proposed Mixed Martial Arts Camp

You were recently hired as a Youth Protection Coordinator at your institution. Prior to being hired, there was no policy regarding camps and programs on your campus, and no person directly responsible for working with camps and programs. The new policy you manage requires all camps to be registered and you are the person that must make sure all camps meet the minimum requirements. Your institution's wrestling coach wants to have a week-long overnight Mixed Martial Arts camp.

1. What are some of the concerns that the wrestling coach should address prior to the camp being registered / approved? (Response protocols, supervision ratios, facility reservations, etc.)
2. How would the requirements change if the camp included a trip to a forested mountain region of the United States where tick-borne encephalitis was known to be a danger?

Comments:

1. A few of the considerations would be as follows:
 - Background checks on volunteers, staff and student workers;
 - o Proper screening and background checks have been completed
 - o Policies / rules in place for participant, volunteer and staff conduct;
 - o Appropriate camp-to-counselor ratio provided (consideration of age & activity);
 - o Guest visitation protocols in place;
 - o Check-in & check-out procedures in place;
 - o Inclement weather protocols in place;
 - o Established protocol for injury or illness;
 - o Protocol for reporting and responding to participant, staff or volunteer misconduct (including mandatory reporting);
 - o Emergency notification procedures in place;
 - o Inspection of facilities to be used
 - o All required forms completed
 - o Proper training of staff and volunteers
 - o Facilities have been reserved and there are no scheduling conflicts
 - o Transportation needs have been identified;
 - o Authorized vehicles and drivers have been arranged.
 - o Institution employees educated on proper use of leave;
 - o Structured volunteer program is in place.
2. This was the scenario in [**Munn v. The Hotchkiss School, Munn v Hotchkiss**](#)
Facts: A student at a private boarding school in Connecticut brought a negligence action in federal court after contracting tick-borne encephalitis on an educational trip to China. The CDC

had information on its website warning of this danger associated with a forested region in China where the children would be visiting.

Verdict: The jury awarded 41.75 million in damages – 31 million was non-economic damages.

Rationale:

- The school was obligated to exercise reasonable care to protect students in their charge from foreseeable harm.
- The school had a duty to warn about and to protect against serious insect-borne disease in the areas to be visited on the trip.

Scenario #3 Camper Discipline

It's 1 am, and you learn that a residential camp counselor detects a distinctive odor coming from one of the dorm rooms. She suspects it is marijuana. Three 15 year old campers occupy the room. The counselor contacts the camp director who in turn contacts you. The camper code of conduct signed by the guardian and reviewed during orientation prohibits smoking and possessing marijuana.

1. What advice do you give?
2. Should the campers be removed from the program?
3. When is the appropriate time to contact the students' parents / guardians?
4. What if the parents cannot be contacted; are unavailable to come and pick up their child; refuse to believe the child has done this?
5. Should the campers conduct play a role in any future admission decision to the institution? Would the answer be different if the camper was 17 and had an application pending?

Comments:

1. Campus public safety is the best ally in this situation. You should ensure campus police are contacted promptly.
2. This is a serious violation of the rules and those campers who violated the rules regarding substance abuse should be removed from the program.
3. The parents / guardians should be contacted as soon as the basic facts are understood.
4. If the parents refuse to pick up their children then the police department should be involved in contacting social services. This could possibly be a sign of larger problems in the relationship between the camper and the parents / guardians.
5. The institution should not use any juvenile misconduct records maintained by the police or courts in its decision. Other factors to include the campers conduct at camp as documented in camp incident conduct reports could be considered.

Scenario #4 Camper's Disclosure

Ten-year old Mia is in tears. During lunch she spilled grape juice on her new yellow camp tee shirt. She has tried rinsing it but the stain will not come out. Counselor Caring asks her what is wrong and Mia confides that her dad will probably beat her for ruining the new shirt. Counselor Caring believes that Mia is speaking honestly. It's 1:00 p.m. The dad is coming to pick up Mia at 3 pm. The program immediately calls you, as the Youth Protection Coordinator.

Q: What steps will you take?

Comments:

1. Mia is signaling a potentially real risk of abuse at home. This is sometimes termed an outcry. While the college, the camp and the youth protection coordinator have no authority to take Mia into protective custody or conduct an investigation, DFACS and law enforcement both have this authority.
2. It would be best to contact the police department to allow them to assess and to report the information in accordance with your campus' policy.
3. If the father arrives first, you would not attempt to keep the child from him.
4. Other things to consider:
 - Give Mia a new camp t-shirt
 - If she does not return to camp the next day, call the authorities again to follow-up.