

## **Testimony of Scott Brody, Owner & Director of Camps Kenwood & Evergreen**

Good Afternoon Commissioner Caswell and members of the Governor's Reopening Taskforce. It is a pleasure to be here today. My name is Scott Brody, and I am the owner of Camps Kenwood & Evergreen, located in Wilmot and founded in 1930. While I am here as a camp director and NH business owner, I also volunteer as the National Board Chair of the American Camp Association and have had the privilege of being part of the national efforts to help camps to be the best possible public health partners during this difficult time.

NH has a rich camp history, with camps dating back well over 100 years. My camp is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary this summer, a relative newcomer, and in all of that time I am only its third director and owner. I grew up, spending my summers here in NH from age 8, and I never left. Directing a camp is a difficult job, like so many, with tremendous responsibility to care for our children and young staff members. Most people who do this work view it as a calling. Camp was where I found my strengths as a child, made many of my closest friends in life, and learned about teamwork and leadership and how to solve problems.

Today's kids need camp even more than we did, especially right now. They are craving friendship, and the chance to play again and find their strengths in a time in which so many of us feel a bit powerless. Their parents need camp too, as camp serves as both critical learning and childcare to 20 million families across America. This is true for New Hampshire's families. New Hampshire's 100's of day camps and nearly 100 overnight camps, provide critical family supports as parents reenter the work force. I know that you are aware of this, and this is why camps were included in Phase 2 of the White House's plan to Open Up America Again, and why it has been deemed an "immediate priority sector" by this body.

As you formulate recommendations for the Governor to consider, I know that you are trying to balance public health and economic necessity in each sector you examine. I'd like to share some information with you that may make your deliberations about camps a bit easier.

First, camps serve young children—ages 5 to 15 for day camps and 7 and 15 for overnight camps—and these children are at the lowest level of risk for bad health outcomes due to COVID-19, thank goodness. Our staffs are also generally at the young end of the wider workforce, with almost all of them under the age of 25. Again, this is an age cohort among the lowest risk groups for serious COVID illness.

Camps largely operate outdoors, often on large campuses with plenty of room for appropriate social distancing. For our resident camps, this provides for the opportunity to totally self-isolate this summer. Once all arrive, we will pull up the draw bridge and stay on our campuses. Kids and staff can arrive on campus on buses we charter and leave at the end of their term the same way, without ever leaving our campuses.

We know that this is a critical concern for this group, and for our neighbors and friends in the towns in which our camps are located. We will not be bringing virus to our local communities

this summer. We will protect our local communities by operating independently, with campers and staff never leaving our property.

We also have our own health centers, with nurses and in many cases, pediatricians at our camps throughout the summer. We have 100 years of experience handling communicable diseases of all sorts, including functioning during the polio and H1N1 outbreaks. We did not tax local health resources in 2009 during H1N1; rather, we managed any illness on campus, and that illness posed greater risks for children than this virus does. We are a self-sufficient group, and all camps will know how to follow best practices in social distancing, disinfection, screening and monitoring, detection of symptomatic children or staff, isolation and quarantine, and if necessary, transportation directly home for the impacted individual.

The American Camp Association has been partnering with the CDC, and through a partnership with Y-USA, has sponsored the creation of an expert panel composed of fellows from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Harvard School of Public Health, the Association of Camp Nursing, epidemiologists and other public health experts to develop detailed educational resources for camps to use through this crisis. This guidance is being shared with the CDC and state and local public health agencies as it is developed, and we anticipate it will be finalized by May 18<sup>th</sup>. I have shared the "Table of Contents" for this guidance with you at end of my written testimony, so you can see how detailed it will be. We are hoping that this can serve as a basis for DHHS and our other state health authorities to develop final guidance for New Hampshire's day and resident camps to use this summer, in addition to CDC issued guidance. We are committed to protecting the health of safety of all of our children, our counselors, and the members of the communities that we are a part of.

Many of New Hampshire's day and resident camps are family run or are run by trusted non-profit partners and have been here to serve children and to employ local community members for generations. Many of the folks in Wilmot and our local area that are my age had their first job at Kenwood & Evergreen. We have been here through thick and thin, through the depression, the polio epidemic, the wars, and everything since. We have survived and supported our local communities through recessions, supporting our local tradesmen and businesses when things were pretty tough. We are reliable property tax payers, with many private camps, including ours, being the largest tax payers in their communities.

But our local communities have also been there for us. 12 years ago, there was a fire at my camp in early June. Some mice or red squirrels had eaten through some wiring and my entire dining hall, camp office, maintenance office, water supply, and just about everything else was burned to the ground. My campers were due to arrive in three weeks. As I stood at the side of that smoldering building that had stood for generations, the Wilmot Fire Chief and Police Chief stood by my side, arm in arm with me. What I remember most about that time was the pickup trucks and vans that showed up the next morning. Every carpenter I had ever employed, every contractor, every neighbor from miles around showed up at my camp to offer their help in our

hour of need. With their help, we turned a barn theater into a temporary dining hall and managed to open camp on time. That was our best summer ever, and I will never forget it.

I know this is complicated and the stakes are high for everyone concerned. But I can promise you this: we have one mission this summer...to take care of our kids and counselors and the communities that we live in by being the best possible public health partners. We will not fall short. And we are good at this. We know how to manage through crises and difficult times. If there is a working group formed to focus on camps, we would be eager to collaborate with you and be your partners in this. Together, we can provide kids with what they really need so badly right now and give their families a chance to get back to work. Thank you.

## Camp Operations Guide Summer 2020

The [American Camp Association](#) (ACA) and the [YMCAs of the United States](#) (Y-USA) are engaged together to provide educational resources to both day and overnight camps, state and local health departments, and parents/guardians and campers. The educational resources are being developed by an independent expert panel being coordinated by [Environmental Health & Engineering, Inc.](#) (EH&E), a Boston-based consulting firm specializing in environmental health. This expert panel has convened specialists in pediatric medicine, camp medicine and nursing, epidemiology, infectious disease management, biological safety, industrial hygiene, organizational design, and other technical specialties. Experts participating in this panel are professionals from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Association of Camp Nursing. These educational resources will be shared with CDC and state and local health departments so that all parties can be informed. Information will be available on the ACA and Y-USA websites as it becomes available.

**The following table of contents is an outline of the resources that ACA will be providing. Details for each section will be added as they are completed between now and mid-May.**

## Field Guide for Camps on Implementation of CDC Guidance

### Introduction

This field guide is designed to provide camp directors and staff with a practical guide and tool kit to implement specific recommendations provided by the CDC in relation to risk reduction at camps. The objective of this field guide is to provide educational materials for camp staff to reduce potential exposures to and spread of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) the virus that causes COVID-19. The recommendations provided here are designed to be implemented for various types of camps (e.g. adventure/touring; day, resident, backcountry, weekend) and geographic locations and pertain to camps in geographical locations under low and medium mitigation conditions, [according to](#)

[federal guidance](#). Any recommendations in this guide should also coincide with a given camp's communicable disease plan.

## **Outline**

### **1.0 Communication**

- Communication with Parents
- Communication with Staff
- Communication with Children
- Communication with Vendors
- Communication with Local Health Departments, EMS, and Hospitals
- Communication with Healthcare Providers

### **2.0 Content and Guideline Communication**

- Communication on Policies and Procedures
- Updates and Communication from CDC
- Updates and Communication from OSHA
- Updates on State Specific Guidelines

### **3.0 Health – Screening and Preventing COVID-19 Infections**

- Camper Health
  - Intake Screening and Assessment
  - Regular Screening and Assessment
- Staff Health
  - Intake Screening and Assessment
  - Regular Screening and Assessment
  - Overnight Camp Staff
  - Precamp Quarantine Considerations
- Testing and Screening
  - Good (Minimum Guidelines) – Monitor Symptoms Regularly
  - Better (Recommended Guideline) – Monitor Temperature
  - Best (Recommended Guideline) – Serological Antibody Testing and/or Nose Swab
  - PCR

- Preventing Spread
  - Handwashing
  - Physical Distancing
  - Face Masks and Cloth Face Covers
  - Discrete Program Cohorts
- Response and Management of Case(s) or Probable Case(s)[\[2\]](#)

#### **4.0 Facilities**

- Offices and Office Areas
- Health Center and Sick Person Isolation Area
- Dining Areas
- Indoor and Outdoor Athletic Facilities
- Sports Equipment
- Residential Camp
  - Housing
  - Sleeping Density
- Day Camp
- Building Ventilation
- Common and Shared Spaces
- Cleaning and Sanitizing
- Pools and Lakes

#### **5.0 Food Service and Deliveries**

- Vendor Procedures for Deliveries and Supplies
- Cafeteria Workers PPE and Protocols
- No Contact Protocols
- Hand Hygiene Stations
- Dining Schedules
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Canteen or Camp Store

## **6.0 Cleaning and Disinfection**

- Increased Frequency of Cleaning
- Changing Areas/Locker Rooms
- Toilets, Showers, Restrooms
- Testing
  - Good (Minimum Guideline) – EPA approved; cleaning protocols; records checklist
  - Better (Recommended Guideline) – ATP test to audit cleaning
  - Better (Recommended Guideline) – Environmental surface swab test for SARS-CoV-2

## **7.0 Activities**

- Group Activities
- Outdoor Activities
- Rainy Day Activities
- Shared and Assigned Equipment
- Educational Programs/Activities – e.g., STEM
- Aquatics, Water-Related, and Boats
- Indoor Activities
- Competitive and Recreational Sports
- Wilderness Activities
- Other Physical Activities
- Travel Off-Site – Staff Days Off; Field Trips
- Visitors/Tours
- Equestrian
- Performing Arts
- Creative Arts
- Range Activities
- Guest Speakers and Presentations
- Administrative

## **8.0 Campers and Staff**

- Groups and Cohorting for Social Distancing – Concentric Circle of Infection Prevention Model
- Campers and Staff with Preexisting Medical Conditions

## **9.0 Transportation**

- To Camp and Drop Off
- From Camp and Pick Up
- Camp Travel – Buses and Vans

## **10.0 PPE Plan – for staff and workers**

## **11.0 Supplies List**

- [Suggested Camp Supplies and Materials for 2020 Camp Season](#)

## **12.0 Appendices**

- A. Incident or case reporting checklist/form
- B. Campout safety checklist
- C. COVID-19 safety checklist
- D. Information on how to talk to campers about coronavirus
- E. Sample Communications