



Director

Rabbi Dovid Presser

Associate Directors

Rabbi Aaron Yitzchok Presser

Rabbi Moshe Presser

Main Office: 718-633-1385

Staff Office: 732-905-3863

Summer Office: 570-488-6125

Dear Parents:

I respectfully take the liberty of communicating with you about an extremely important issue that deserves your personal consideration as we get ready for what will b'ezras Hashem be a wonderful camp season.

Over the years, the Association of Jewish Camp Operators (AJCO), which serves as an umbrella group for Orthodox Jewish summer camps, has issued guidelines and suggestions at the request of our Gedolei Rabbonim and Roshei Yeshiva on a number of issues, such as the Safe Driving Guidelines in the Mountains.

In response to inquiries from a number of camps, the Moetzei Gedolei HaTorah of Agudath Israel of America has asked AJCO to coordinate certain efforts to help protect the privacy and bodily integrity of our children. Among other things, they asked AJCO to work with the summer camps to take positive steps to avoid any potential problems - including enlisting parents to discuss this subject with their children before sending them off to camp. They further requested that AJCO prepare a document guiding parents on how to advise their children to respond in the event their bodily privacy has been threatened or chas v'shalom violated.

We are therefore enclosing a "Keep it Safe" fact sheet that has been prepared by AJCO in conjunction with the experts at OHEL Children's Home and Family Services. We respectfully urge you to speak to your child or children and convey to them the important points outlined in the following document.

Understanding the importance of this issue, we are committed to taking every step in our power to protect the safety of our campers and staff. We will be doing our part by sensitizing staff regarding this issue, and we respectfully enlist your assistance in speaking to your children as well. Of course, please feel free to call us if any issue or problem arises, or if you have any further question.

Looking forward to a wonderful summer, both b'ruchnyus u 'vgashmius.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Dovid Presser
Director

KEEP IT SAFE

Things to tell Your Child Before the Camp Season

- Explain to your child that there are unfortunately a small number of people with a sickness that gives them a yetzer hara to touch children immodestly – i.e. in place ordinarily covered by a bathing suit.
- Teach your child that no one, not even a person in a position of authority or close relative, has the right to touch him or her in such a way.
- Teach your child that it is OK to say to such a person, "No, get away."
- Let your child know that he should tell you or a trusted member of the camp administration, such as the camp director or head counselor, about any inappropriate touching. Emphasize that this does not constitute loshon hara or any other aveirah; and that in fact it is a mitzvah to report such matters.
- Tell your child that he should not listen to anyone who tells them to "keep secrets" from his parents or from the camp administration.
- Tell your child that he should not be afraid of threats from anyone who touches him improperly. Both you and the camp administration will protect him.

General Pointers

- Be alert for changes in your child's behavior that could signal abuse, such as sudden secretiveness, sleeplessness, withdrawal from activities or increased anxiety.
- If your child is a victim of abuse, don't blame him. Listen and consult with a competent professional.
- Above all, let your child know that he can always tell you anything without fear of blame. Communication is critical.