



FREE OUR DREAMS

Our Restorative Process and Practice Guidelines

Guidelines for Restorative Practices – Principles that Guide our Restorative Approach

- The physical, psychological and emotional safety of individuals and the FREE OUR DREAMS community is our most important principle.
- If a violation or harm to an individual or the FREE OUR DREAMS community occurs, our intent and goal is to repair the harm.
- Repairing harm means identifying solutions and taking steps to engage all stakeholders affected by the harm.
- Our restorative process aims to make the repair as “right as possible” rather than perfect
- Our restorative process will involve responding to issues at the earliest point possible and with the maximum amount of voluntary cooperation and minimum coercion.
- We prefer that for individuals who pose significant safety risks and are not yet cooperative be placed in settings where the emphasis is on safety, values, ethics, responsibility, accountability, and civility.
- These individuals should understand the impact of their behavior on other participants, be invited to learn empathy, and offered learning opportunities to become better equipped with skills to rejoin the FREE OUR DREAMS community.

Our restorative approach has two components:

Preventing conflict

Selecting role models as mentors

- Identify mentors, and young adult leaders who can culturally identify with the young people at summit.
- Identify mentors, and young adult leaders who can connect with the young people on the basis of shared experiences.

Building rapport with youth leaders

- Learn youth leaders names (nicknames) & use them as often as possible
- Connect-demonstrate that you are not perfect or different from the youth leaders
- Earn respect through consistency

Giving participants an opportunity

- Avoid labeling youth leaders
- Once a person is labeled ...s/he/them is at a disadvantage
- Give youth leaders an opportunity to start with a clean slate each day

Positive Reinforcement

- Wait for something positive...then JUMP all over it
- Avoid the broken record: No...No...don't....youth can make decision for themselves
- Positive reinforce when appropriate and be direct about what the youth leaders are doing well.

Give students Choices

- Allow youth leaders to make choices in as many ways as possible.
- Give youth leaders more than one choice (be comfortable with each choice provide)
- Stay true and honest with the choice chosen
- Make sure that each choice has outcomes that are desirable

Establish community agreements and ground rules on the first day of summit

- Community agreements provide opportunities for the FREE OUR DREAMS community to determine their own expectations.
- Community agreements allow for adult chaperones to remind youth leaders when the agreements are not being followed.

Intervening in conflict

While we anticipate that our prevention strategies will mitigate conflict, we know that there will be cases that require direct intervention in conflict. We see three levels of conflict that require responses appropriate to the level of behavior.

Level 1 Behavior: Not taking participating in activities, defiance and bad attitude

In these cases, we want to enthusiastically encourage youth leaders to participate, but leave room for youth choice. Avoid forcing youth to participate because they may need space to come into the FREE OUR DREAMS community on their own. If a youth's non-participation creates a safety risk (i.e. leaving campus, leaving dorm after lights out), the RA's, chaperones and restorative staff will work to keep youth leaders engaged in summit activities.

Level 2 Behavior: Not respecting others, stealing, and threats and or creating an unsafe environment for other youth leaders and staff.

In these cases it is important for the adult chaperone and the restorative justice staff to engage in one-on-one conversations in order restores the harm done to the community or individual redirect the youth leader back into the community. Level 2 behaviors may violate one or more of the summit rules, but are not grounds for youth leader to be dismissed from camp.

Level 3 Behavior: Fighting, use or possession of drugs, weapons

In cases where there is a physical confrontation with staff or youth leaders, use or possession of drugs, and or weapons, the chaperone, FREE OUR DREAMS leadership and one or more of our restorative justice leads will engage in a group conversation with the youth leader. These conversations are not to investigate the causes of the conflict, but rather to learn what it takes for the youth leader to repair the harm, and re-enter the community. In cases where there have been multiple unsuccessful attempts for the youth leader to restore harm and return to the community, the youth leader will be given a choice to leave the summit.

Decision-making process regarding conflict and restorative practices

In all cases, appropriate and swift intervention will be discussed and determined by FREE OUR DREAMS coordinators, and the restorative justice team.