



Behavior Management Policy

Nevada Outdoor School has adopted a behavior and discipline policy that emphasizes physical and emotional safety for all program staff and participants. Positive discipline, clear expectations, and appropriate consequences are at the foundation of our Behavior Management Policy. At Nevada Outdoor School we practice teamwork, cooperation, positive problem solving, kindness, and respect of ourselves and others.

During onboarding and training for staff and during the Camp Agreement discussion with all campers, this policy is clearly explained and implemented. The word staff in this policy refers to both Nevada Outdoor School (NOS) Staff and AmeriCorps National Service Members.

All NOS program expectations and behavior management processes will be delivered and implemented with kindness. NOS staff will never use verbal, physical or emotional punishments or attacks (yelling, cursing, hitting, belittling, etc.). If you personally need to calm down before entering into the behavior management process, do that. Do not attempt this process if you are not prepared and calm.

Program expectations and behavior management will be applied to individual programs and participants in an equitable manner, recognizing that equitable does not mean “the same for all”. Individual considerations must be taken into consideration for both the program, as well as the individuals participating in each program. When there is an exceptional situation with a program or an individual, utilize your supervisor to help navigate that situation.

Overarching Behavior Management Principles

At NOS, we work with people in a variety of settings. Behavior management strategies and techniques may change depending on the setting, type of programming, and ages of participants. Solid behavior management techniques can be adapted to all ages, including adults.

The overarching behavior management principles that NOS subscribes to are:

- * Respect for self
- * Respect for others
- * Respect for place (environment/materials)

These should be referred to as “The 3 R’s.”

NOS follows and utilizes the 3 R’s at all times: in the office, administering youth programs, at trainings, and during community events. During staff onboarding and prior to any NOS program, the 3 R’s are to be shared and expectations are to be discussed, in a program-relevant manner.

In addition to The 3 R's, NOS's Outdoor Ethics Philosophy helps guide behavior expectations and management. Our Outdoor Ethics Philosophy fits not only outdoor recreation ethics (behavior), but also interactions with peers, parents, and other people. NOS's Outdoor Ethics Philosophy is broken down into 3 parts:

- * Analyze Actions
- * Evaluate Impacts
- * Choose Wisely

These should be referred to as "The AIC Model".

With guidance and support, participants learn to analyze their actions, evaluate the impacts those actions have, and choose wisely to minimize negative impacts.

When it is observed that The 3 R's are not being attended to the AIC Model can be used to help guide and manage situational awareness and reinforce positive behavior expectations.

Specifics considerations and examples for each of The 3 R's are listed below to guide the discussion and set clear expectations. These are not exhaustive lists. For each event or experience the leaders will need to pre-plan and consider program-relevant and specific expectations.

RESPECT FOR SELF

Because I respect myself, I will:

- remain with adults so that I am safe
- act in a safe manner for the environment I am in
- participate in activities so I can learn and grow
- not bring dangerous substances to camp, including knives
- self-monitor for the need for water, sunscreen, or a bathroom break
- alert NOS staff of any injuries, illnesses or needs as they arise

Example of AIC Model to help manage behavior associated with Respect for Self:

If a camper consistently is running through the campground, the Naturalist can pull that camper aside and ask the camper if they are respecting themselves by making choices that will keep themselves and others safe. They can discuss the action (running in an inappropriate setting), potential negative impact (injury to themselves or fellow campers), and then choose wisely to walk through the campground.

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Because I respect others, I will:

- watch out for my friends and fellow participants to help keep them safe
- encourage others to participate in a kind and compassionate way
- not bring dangerous substances to camp, including knives
- be kind and considerate of others (not push and shove in line or crowd people) when getting materials or equipment
- be on time
- follow directions and follow through on my actions

Example of AIC Model to help manage behavior associated with Respect for Others:

If a camper is being mean or picking on another camper (name calling, bullying, etc.), the leader will pull that camper aside and ask the camper if they are respecting others by talking poorly to their colleague. They can discuss the action (disrespectful words), potential impact it is having (harm to the other camper's feelings, self-esteem and experience), and then discuss alternatives, and choose wisely to always speak with kindness and respect.

RESPECT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND EQUIPMENT

Because I respect the environment and the equipment I use, I will:

- practice responsible recreation (Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace) principles that are taught to me
- leave the area better than we found it, whenever possible
 - pick-up trash
 - put things away neatly
 - wipe down tables
- listen for instructions before using equipment
- take care of (use gently) any equipment assigned to me or my group
- clean and organize equipment before putting it away

Example of AIC Model to help manage behavior associated with Respect for Environment and Equipment:

If a camper is being irresponsible on the trail (feeding wildlife, littering, trampling vegetation, etc.) the leader will pull that participant aside and ask if they are respecting the environment through their actions. They can discuss the specific action (ex- feeding wildlife) and the potential negative impacts (wildlife getting sick, altering behavior, etc.), and then discuss how the participant can choose wisely to avoid feeding wildlife in the future.

Preparation

Good Behavior management is intentional and starts before you ever step into the classroom, start a field trip, summer camp or any program: it starts with proper **planning, preparation, and clear delivery of expectations.**

Prior to your event, think through as many aspects of your lesson/station/camp. Consider the materials that will be used and anticipate what kids may do with them. Think through the flow of your presentation, paying careful attention to your **introduction** (laying out your expectations and goal), **transitions** (minimizing opportunities for youth to get distracted or off task), and the **conclusion** (wrapping it all up in a clear and effective way, revisiting your goal).

From this mental run-through, make a list of the specific 3 R's that pertain to your situation and age group. These will become your **expectations**. Expectations need to be clearly presented and discussed with your class/group/camp BEFORE the meat of the program begins. The time you spend sharing these expectations is important. For Summer Camps, this will be done as part of the Camp Agreement. It is important to know what your expectations are going into this discussion so you can help guide the group's conversation.

Positive Reinforcement

Behavior management requires you to have provided clear expectations, give clear instructions, and then pay attention to what is happening.

When redirection is needed, consider using “start up” statements, not “shut down” statements (see table). Think of these statements ahead of time during your mental walk-through so you are ready to respond in a start-up manner.

Start Up Statements	Shut Down Statements
Thank you for using walking feet.	Stop running.
Thank you for quiet mouths.	Stop talking.
Thank you for raising your hand.	Stop blurting.
I like how my scientists are sitting quietly waiting for the next instruction.	Stop messing with your pencil and shuffling your papers.

SCHOOL-BASED (classroom lessons/field trips) Behavior Management Process:

- Verbal warning – when you observe something that is outside The 3 R’s, immediately pull the student aside and utilize the AIC Model to analyze the action, impact and choices for moving forward.
- If the action continues, get the teacher involved and decide together if the student can continue with the lesson. Have the child involved in the conversation, looping back around to The 3 R’s and AIC Model.
- If the action still continues, review The 3 R’s and AIC Model with the child and let them know that their choice to continue the action and the negative impact that action is having has caused them to be removed from the program. The student will need to sit with the teacher. The teacher now has full responsibility for that student.

SUMMER CAMP Behavior Management Process:

All campers and parents are to be made aware of this Behavior Management Process **PRIOR** to camp via the Parent Meeting and the Camper Handbook. Once the Camp Agreement has been established, it is the responsibility of the Lead Naturalist to review the NOS Behavior Management Process (below) so campers fully understand the consequences of not following the Camp Agreement.

- Verbal warning – when you observe something that is outside The 3 R’s, immediately pull the camper aside and utilize the AIC Model to analyze the action, impact and choices for moving forward. Record this interaction in the **Disciple Log**.
- Written warning – if the behavior continues and needs to be addressed again, pull the camper aside and fill in the written “The 3 R Contract.” (Some kids need this formality to help them process what is

occurring). The 3 R Contract states the action, the impact, and how the camper is going to choose to behave from this point forward. Keep the 3 R Contract in your camp binder. If needed, implement an appropriate consequence, like sitting out until the next activity so the camper has time to process things, cool off and change their behavior. Record this written warning in the Discipline Log.

- Call Home – If the negative behavior persists, pull the camper aside and review The 3 R Contract. At this point, discuss the agreed upon solution for the problem and update/come up with a new solution if needed. This second written warning/conversation needs to be recorded on the Discipline Log. Let the camper know that it is time to call their parent/adult. With the camper present, call their parent/adult and explain the situation (use your 3 R Contract as a template for what to say). Be objective and share only facts. “This is what’s happening and why it’s a problem, this was the solution we agreed upon, it continued to happen, we reviewed/updated our solution, if this happens again, you will need to come pick up [camper] from camp.”
 - At this point you need to call your supervisor and inform them of the situation. If you cannot get in touch with a parent/adult (make sure to call all numbers you have - there should be an emergency contact number to call as well), make sure to let your supervisor know that they may need to help out.
- Removal from program – isolate camper aside and call parent/guardian. Inform them what has occurred and tell them that unfortunately, they need to come get their child. Have the camper “sit out” while waiting for their parent/adult. A Naturalist needs to be with this camper at all times. When a parent/adult arrives, have the camper tell their parent/adult what has transpired using The 3 R Contract as the basis. Answer any questions and say good-bye. If the parent has any questions or is upset, have them go to or call the NOS office.

PLEASE NOTE: The decision to send a student home will be made by the program director working closely with the activity leader. Whether a student is sent home at this time depends upon the nature of the behavior that resulted in the warnings, the attitude of the student, the student’s home situation, and the time until the end of the program. The student may be isolated from other students by staying with a person from the Nevada Outdoor School staff for the remainder of the program.

Zero Tolerance Policy

At NOS, the health and safety of all program participants and Staff is a top priority. For this reason, there are Zero Tolerance Policies for specific situations where such behaviors and actions will result in immediate removal from the program. The Zero Tolerance Policy is to be clearly communicated to all parents/guardians and program participants **PRIOR** to the program via the Parent Meeting and the Camper Handbook.

Zero Tolerance Behaviors and Actions are:

- Behaviors or actions that put themselves, other participants, or a staff member intentionally in harm's way
- Stealing, harming, or destroying property or facilities that do not belong to them

- Possession of
 - Weapons
 - Knives
 - Illegal drugs
- Possession of any prescription or non-prescription medicines in the sleeping area (**all** medications must be kept and dispensed by Nevada Outdoor School staff).

NOS EMPLOYEES AND AMERICORPS MEMBERS Behavior Management Process:

- Verbal warning – when you observe something that is outside The 3 R's, the supervisor will immediately pull the staff member aside and utilize the AIC Model to analyze the action, impact and options moving forward.
- If action continues, the Associate Director will get involved and a formal written warning will be created based on the The 3 R Contract. The 3 R Contract states the action, the impact, and how the staff member is going to choose to behave from this point forward. Keep the 3 R Contract in the staff personnel folder. If needed, consider an appropriate consequence.
- If the action still continues, review The 3 R's and AIC Model with the staff member and let them know that their action is causing them to be removed from the program.