



# DREAM

The Village Mentoring Organization

Safety for Overnight Trips  
dreamprogram.org

 The DREAM Program

 @DREAMprogram

## A few boundaries and guidelines to highlight!

- **General Conduct:** As representatives of DREAM, we must hold ourselves to the highest standards at all DREAM functions and at any time we might be viewed as members of the DREAM organization (both with and without youth). Showing gratitude for the generosity of others and acting at all times as if representing the entire organization is important to maintain respect for ourselves, our work, our programs, and DREAM as a whole.
- **Two-deep Leadership:** When programming in non-public spaces a minimum of two responsible adults need be present. Ideally, two DREAM mentors will be present at such times. If this is not possible, another responsible adult may accompany a DREAM mentor on such an outing. On co-ed overnight outings, at least two adults of each sex needs to be in attendance and present in the sleeping area. Individuals who have not completed DREAM's Screening Procedures should never be left alone with youth.
- **Privacy:** We need to respect the privacy of all of DREAM's participants. Privacy should be respected in situations such as changing into swimming suits or using the restrooms, as well as taken into consideration in terms of confidentiality, care, medical disclosure, and thoughtfulness in sharing information about our mentees and each other.
- **Proper Preparation:** Always plan to be inclusive of all DREAMers in your program. Activities with elements of higher than normal risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation. This includes: experience, equipment, clothing, supervision, parent consultation, awareness of child health history, and other appropriate safety measures. If you have any uncertainties regarding safety or risk, before undertaking an activity, please seek assistance from the DREAM Office. In case of injury or incident, be sure to communicate with parents, co-chairs, and the DREAM Office.
- **Front Seat Rule:** All youth 13 and older may ride in the front seat. Any youth under 13 years of age must ride in the back seat at all times.
- **Booster Seats:** All youth 7 years of age and younger must ride in approved child safety restraints. DREAM mentors should use the mentee's own booster seat.
- **The Law:** Obey all driving rules and regulations. Always drive with your license and a current copy of your vehicle's insurance and registration. Always err on the side of caution especially in the case of yellow lights and always obey the speed limit.
- **Keys, Cars, and Kids:** Keys should be with driver at all times for safety reasons. Youth and car keys is often a formula for disaster. Youth should also never be in a car without an adult present in the vehicle. When you are not in your car lock the doors.
- **Cell Phones and other Tech:** When driving for DREAM your attention should be on the road. Do not talk on the phone while driving, and refrain from using iPods, CD players, or other devices that detract from your ability to focus on safe driving. Please choose a radio station, CD, iPod track, etc. prior to putting the car in gear!
- **Music:** Youth absolutely love listening to music in the car. Please make sure music is appropriate in content and in the messages it conveys.

## Homesickness

- Happens mostly at night and can be contagious! It is best approached by a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, and a hand to hold. Let the homesick mentee know that homesickness is totally normal, and tell him or her about the time you got really homesick and how you got through it ... personal stories really help!
- Set eventual check in times that the mentee may feel temporarily comforted by but will potentially forget about in hopes that they'll be fine later on: "You're so strong/brave. You're going to do great tonight – check in with me at breakfast tomorrow, ok?"

- Keep something special of a mentor's in your tent that a mentee can use to feel comforted: "This is my teddy bear, Freckles, that I sleep with when I'm sad. Do you want to sleep with him tonight?"
- Do not tell mentees that you can do something for them that you cannot follow through on, such as a) taking them home, b) calling home, or c) bargaining with them to alleviate the moment but may create future problems.
- If a mentee does end up going home try not to make a trip farther than 1.5 hours (have parents from farther away meet you half way). Take another mentor or staff member with you and find another sleeping option if making it back to camp at night would be a foolish thing (sleepy driving = extremely dangerous!).

## Tent Time

- Tent Time is an important way to wrap up the day's events. But do not confuse "tent time" with "getting ready for bed." They should be separate, because trying to do them both at the same time will only result in confusion.
- Tent Time can take a variety of forms: Roses and Thorns, playing music softly, reading or telling a story and talking about it, talking about the day, etc. It is up to you what you do with this time, but keep in mind that it is an opportunity to bring everyone back together at the end of the day and reflect on everything you did.
- "Getting ready for bed" means brushing teeth, putting on pajamas, taking a trip to the P&P (or peeing in the woods), etc. Make sure to help mentees first during this time before you get ready for bed. Begin talking in low tones, and make sure that the mentees know that quiet time will begin soon and we must prepare ourselves by speaking softly. Yelling that can be heard by the other sleeping areas will only prolong this time and make the transition more difficult.
- Once mentees are fully ready, gather them either in the center of the sleeping area or let them remain on their bunks. Having a lit candle in the center of the room helps keep the mood soft.
- Please do not skimp on doing Tent Time. There may be some situations where it is not possible to do tent time that night, but this is an extremely important part of the day, and also gives mentees something to look forward to once they've gotten ready for bed. It creates a safe space for cabin groups to bond and share.

## Wake-Up

- Wake-up for the 9-12 boys is typically earlier than wakeup for the other kiddos because they get up early anyway. Before bed, set some ground rules for those who are early risers so that they don't decide to wander away from the sleeping area while everyone is still sleeping.
- The 9-12 girls could typically sleep forever (but don't let them)!
- Wake-up songs (whether jarring or gentle) are a great way to get mentees up and excited for the day to begin.

## Meals

- Unless mentees and mentors are helping with food preparation, they should NOT be in the kitchen area at all! Mentors need to be strict about enforcing this, both for the mentees and for themselves.
- Mentees should be led through a hand-washing/hand-sanitizer line prior to being served.
- Mentors serve the food, and ONLY mentors are allowed to distribute condiments! (The teens can handle themselves, but don't let them get crazy with the hot sauce)!
- Clean-up varies, but the most important thing is to make sure mentees hold on to their dirty plates to wash and not stack them somewhere. We should make sure everyone is held accountable for washing their own plate, regardless of whether they are in the cleaning group or not.