



May 12, 2022

Shalom to our Ramah New England family,

Unfortunately, over the past years and in recent weeks, there have come to light incidents at Jewish institutions near and far that are deeply disturbing. Before the hectic weeks that lead up to camp begin in earnest, I wanted to take this time to underscore what we do at Ramah New England to promote the health and safety of our camp community.

Ensuring the health and safety of campers and staff has been something we have been working on consistently since I became the head of Ramah New England in 2006. Our entire professional team is dedicated to continuously learn and grow in order to deliver the safest camp and the best care. The mental, emotional, social and spiritual health of our camp community is what keeps us up at night. This is a year-round focus every year. We pioneered the concept of “camper care” and hired the first full-time year-round camper care director at a summer camp. Every year, we review what happened the previous summer and set goals on how we want our community to grow and thrive.

We have carefully crafted systems and procedures on how we build our camp communities each year, how we train our staff and run our camps during the summer, and how we respond when things do go wrong. Many of those policies, systems and procedures are published on our website, in our handbooks, in emails we send to the community and in blog posts about specific training programs at camp. Below, we provide links to a selection of these materials.

At our annual family orientation sessions in June, we will address this topic further and answer questions. Information on those sessions and other camp procedures will be sent out in the coming days.

The past few years have demonstrated that camp is critical for our children. It also has reinforced the importance of the partnership between camp and our camp families. We strive for honest and transparent communication on topics ranging from COVID to camp safety. We hope providing our safety and response procedures below will continue to build the camp-family trust we so value. We are grateful for your support and partnership.

Todah Rabbah,

Rabbi Ed Gelb (he/him/his)
CEO

(continued on the next page)

Policies and procedures from our Camper and Staff Handbooks:

- Please note that we are linking to our 2021 camper and staff handbooks; these policies will be the same in our 2022 versions, although other information will be updated in the coming weeks.
- [Click here](#) to read, from the overnight camp Staff Handbook, the following policies that were developed in conjunction with National Ramah and Sacred Spaces (www.jewishsacredspaces.org):
 - Standards of conduct
 - Our abuse policy
 - Sexual harassment and child abuse prevention
 - Responding to suspicions of child abuse
 - Camper discipline policy
 - Sexual harassment policy
 - Where can I turn for help if I feel I am being or have been harassed, discriminated against, or retaliated against
- [Click here](#) to read, from the overnight camp Family Handbook, our discipline policy and our abuse and neglect policy.
- [Click here](#) for our detailed description, from the overnight camp Family Handbook, on how we support our campers with mental health and behavioral issues.
- [Click here](#) to read the day camp's discipline, abuse and neglect policies.
- [Click here](#) to read, from the day camp's Staff Manual, policies relating to abuse, harassment, and sexual harassment.
- [Click here](#) for information on our staff training, including an overview of what we cover prior to camp, during Staff Week, and throughout the summer.
- [Click here](#) for information on the organizations and consultants with whom we work.

Statements on creating a safe and inclusive community:

- [Click here](#) to read a letter from Rabbi Gelb explaining our approach to LGBTQ+ and Gender Inclusiveness. That is an update of [our previous statement from 2016](#).
- [Click here](#) to read our statements regarding George Floyd and racial justice.