

# LEAVE NO TRACE FOR EVERY KID™ PROGRAM SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

STAFF  
TRAINING



## OUTCOME

Participants are more personally responsible for practicing and modeling Leave No Trace at camp.

## OBJECTIVES

- Create and agree upon Leave No Trace norms that represent the essence of your program
- Engage participants' ideas, cultural backgrounds, opinions and attitudes in an effort to shape their actions in the outdoors.

## MATERIALS

- Poster board, butcher paper, or a whiteboard-type surface
- Markers
- A reference list of the Leave No Trace Seven Principles and their bullet points

## TIME

30 minutes

## OVERVIEW

Program Specific Principles takes the form of an activity that many youth programs use to create agreed-upon group norms and behavior guidelines with youth participants. In this exercise, you'll be doing the same thing with staff. One of the goals of this activity is to activate staff members' "voice," referring to



their ideas, opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and actions<sup>1</sup>. Through this exercise, a program will be able to take the existing Seven Principles of Leave No Trace, deconstruct their meaning, and build them back up through the lens of the program's goals and philosophy, as well as the diverse backgrounds of the staff and their knowledge of the participant experience.

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

All staff are invited to participate; however, this exercise can be especially effective for groups of staff members who work in the same sub-program or area (e.g., seasonal staff working with the overnight campers, staff members predominantly leading trips off site, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup>Youth Voice: An Educational Movement that Advances Social and Emotional Learning. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). 2018. Chicago, IL. Author.



## YOUTH PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

This resource comes from the Leave No Trace Youth Program Accreditation, which provides directors, managers, teachers, and other youth program staff leaders with essential tools and best practices for the administration of Leave No Trace programming. For more information visit: [lnt.org/accreditation](http://lnt.org/accreditation).

## RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF LEAVE NO TRACE KNOWLEDGE

- Participants should have some experience with the basics of the Leave No Trace Seven Principles before beginning this activity.
- Consider using this activity during the group forming stages of the staff experience.

## SETUP

Gather everyone into a open space. Inside is usually best because it is distraction free, however in the right conditions, this activity can be facilitated outdoors. Make sure to have the writing surface visible to all participants.

## ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Explain to the group that you will be collectively coming up with Leave No Trace guidelines that best fit the group and the program.
2. Before beginning the brainstorming process for the first principle, make sure to review:
  - What is Leave No Trace and how do the principles help us here (in our program)?
  - Guidelines for making sure that everyone feels respected and heard throughout the process. Allow participants to come up with their own suggestions and then follow up by including the topics from the *Recommended Ground Rules*.
3. When at all possible, let staff members drive the conversation amongst themselves. If desired, have one of the participants be the scribe for the activity.

4. When the group is finished, step in as the facilitator to read their new bullet points out loud so that participants can hear them. Make adjustments to the bullets if language is not clear.

## RECOMMENDED GROUND RULES\*

*While this exercise may not touch on the same topics or emotions as peer-to-peer behavior guidelines (e.g., how we treat one another), it is a good idea for participants to adhere to some ground rules for the process.*

**Respect-** give undivided attention to the person who has the floor (permission to speak).

**Openness-** Try to be as open and honest as possible without disclosing other's (family, neighbors, friends or fellow staff members) personal or private issues. It is okay to discuss situations, but don't use names or another ID.

**Right to pass-** It is always okay to pass (meaning "I'd rather not" or "I don't want to answer").

**Nonjudgmental approach-** We can disagree with another person's point of view without putting that person down.

**Taking care to claim our opinions-** We will speak our opinions using the first person and avoid using 'you'. For example, "I think that kindness to animals is important." Not, "You are mean to animals."

**Sensitivity to diversity-** We will remember that people in the group may differ in cultural background and will be careful about making insensitive or careless remarks.

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**Have a good time-** It is okay to have a good time. Creating a safe space is about coming together as a community, being mutually supportive, and enjoying each other's qualities.

*\*Adapted from Creating Group Agreement. 2008. Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC and Setting Group Agreements with Youth. 2014. Heart-Mind Online, Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education, Vancouver, British Columbia.*

## **ADAPTATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

This training comes from an activity with the same name that can be used with youth participants. Check out the variation for youth participants at LNT.org.



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