

Action Research Tool

Facilitator's Note: Each Action Research Tool should take approximately 10 minutes. Depending on your timing, choose 1, 2 or all 6 of the themes below.

Leader:

In a few seconds, I am going to ask you to arrange yourselves into small groups of 4-6 people. Ideally in your group you will have someone who has previous experience living in a boys' bunk and someone who has previous experience living in a girls' bunk and/or someone who has experience with non-binary identities.

Why Are We Doing This?

Introducing action research, the idea behind it, and what we're going to ask campers to do.

This is part of an exercise developed by the Jewish non-profit Moving Traditions to help people who work as counselors and staff in Jewish summer camps to take a closer look at the social environments of their camps. What experiences are campers encountering as they go from being children to pre-teens to teens at camp? Do self-identified boys and self-identified girls and non-binary campers face different pressures? What is the experience of campers that do not conform to dominant gender codes? Where do campers experience positive messages about themselves and others? Where are campers experiencing sexism or sexual harassment or unhealthy pressures at camp? When we finish the interviews, we will all be discussing the issues that we identify and try to come up with suggestions of ways to address them.

Action Research Part 1: Using the Tool

Break into small groups (we recommend 4-6 people) with experienced counselors who have worked with campers of different gender identities in each group to the extent possible. If you have new staff or counselors, they should ask the questions and record the answers of experienced staff. Groups of experienced staff can also interview each other.

Equity At Camp

Researcher ask your interviewee:

For this set of prompts, I am going to read a statement, and I will ask you to respond to the question by telling me a number somewhere between 0 and 5. Totally disagree is 0 and totally agree is 5.

1. At camp most people treat each other with kindness and respect

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

2. There are gender inequities in leadership roles at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Please share what you have noticed:

3. LGBTQI staff are treated differently than other staff.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. Staff who identify as men are treated different than other staff at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

5. Staff who identify as women are treated differently than other staff at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

6. Campers who identify as boys don't have to fit into "one way" of being a boy at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

7. Campers who identify as girls don't have to fit into "one way" of being a girl at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

8. Campers who identify as non-binary or genderfluid don't have to fit into "one way" of being at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

9. There are gender differences in what campers do to make friends at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

10. If so, what differences have you noticed?

11. If we want to have more gender equity at camp we should _____

12. If we want to have more freedom of gender expression we should _____

Body Image

Researcher ask your interviewee:

1. At what age do campers start worrying about their appearance? Age: _____

For some of the prompts below, please respond to the question by telling me a number somewhere between 0 and 5. Totally disagree is 0 and totally agree is 5.

2. In the culture of our camp status/popularity is closely linked to being seen as "hot?"

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. The value of appearance at our camp is different depending on one's gender identity

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. At camp there is no one body type that is seen as beautiful. We celebrate all shapes and sizes.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

5. Campers who dress in a way that "shows off" their bodies are rewarded for doing so.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

If this does happen, where does this happen most often and with whom? _____

6. The camp rules around dress and appropriate clothing treat boys and girls and people of other gender identities fairly.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

If not, what do you think is unfair? _____

7. Campers rank other campers based on appearance. This happens:

All the time Often Occasionally Rarely Never

8. The culture of eating at camp encourages healthy body image.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

9. One thing/place/activity at camp where campers may experience that they are being judged based on their bodies is: _____

10. One thing at camp that helps campers feel good in their bodies is: _____

Sexism and Sexual Harassment

Researcher ask your interviewee:

For this set of prompts, I am going to read a statement, and I will ask you to respond to the question by telling me a number somewhere between 0 and 5. Totally disagree is 0 and totally agree is 5.

1. Sexist language is a problem at our camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Where is this problem most manifest? _____

2. There are campers who engage in playing or teasing that involves grabbing that is inappropriate.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. Counselors respond effectively to campers who engage in playing or teasing that involves inappropriate grabbing or touch.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. There are specific curse words or put downs that some campers use at camp that are derogatory or offensive to others.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

SAY: Do you feel comfortable telling me what words you most commonly hear?
If yes, write words here: _____

5. Staff members also use language that is derogatory or offensive about others amongst themselves.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

6. Staff use sexist language when talking about campers or other staff members.

All the time Often Occasionally Rarely Never

7. Staff at camp are aware of bullying behavior and harassment and respond to it effectively.

All the time Often Occasionally Rarely Never

8. Sexism is one of the topics that generally gets talked about at camp through a planned discussion or activity.

All the time Often Occasionally Rarely Never

Crushes and Romances

Researcher ask your interviewee:

1. At what age are some campers talking about crushes?

Circle Age: 8 – 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 – 13 – 14 – 15 – 16

2. At what age are some campers talking about first kisses?

Circle Age: 8 – 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 – 13 – 14 – 15 – 16

3. At what age are some campers talking about hooking up?

Circle Age: 8 – 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 – 13 – 14 – 15 – 16

4. What does 'hooking up' mean at your camp?

5. At what age do some campers start feeling peer pressure to “hook up”?

Circle Age: 8 – 9 – 10 – 11 – 12 – 13 – 14 – 15 – 16

SAY: Now we will ask agree/disagree questions with 0 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

6. Counselors help campers who ask for support issues around romance, relationships and breakups at camp.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

7. LGBTQ campers are comfortable talking to counselors about their crushes.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

8. Campers get pressure from counselors to have crushes and pursue them.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

9. Counselors are supportive of campers that do not want to participate in romance over the summer.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Consent and Touch:

Researcher ask your interviewee:

Please rate on a 0 to 5 scale.

1. Campers have a clear understanding of what physical touch is appropriate and what touch is inappropriate.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

2. At camp there is a good understanding of consent among the campers.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. What are some of the positive ways that campers interact physically with one another?

4. What are some of the negative or potentially harmful ways that campers interact physically with one another? _____

5. If there are specific activities or times when campers are touching each other in ways that may be inappropriate, can you share those times or activities: _____

6. Sometimes staff will massage or hug campers in an appropriate manner.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

7. At camp there is a good understanding of consent among counselors and staff.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

8. When staff see inappropriate types of touch they speak up and intervene.

All the time Often Occasionally Rarely Never

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

9. Staff know who to go to for help if they have experienced harassment or assault.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

10. Campers know who to go to for help if they have experienced harassment or assault.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Safety and Pressure

Researcher ask your interviewee:

For this set of prompts, I am going to read a statement, and I will ask you to respond to the question by telling me a number somewhere between 0 and 5. 0 being totally disagree and 5 being totally agree.

1. Most staff at camp treat each other with respect regarding matters of sex and sexuality.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

2. Male-identified staff experience a camp as a positive environment in which to explore romance and better understand their own sexuality if they so choose.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. Female-identified staff experience a camp as a positive environment in which to explore romance and better understand their own sexuality if they so choose.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. LGBTQAI -identified staff experience a camp as a positive environment in which to explore romance, pleasure, or sexuality if they so choose.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Please share any comments to help clarify your answers to questions 2-4: _____

5. I am concerned that there are staff who are being pressured to do things sexually that they don't necessarily want to do.

Circle: 0 1 2 3 4 5

6. Share one (1-3) way(s) that camp is positive in terms of what your staff are learning and experiencing in the realm of healthy relationships and/or sexuality... _____

7. Share one way that camp is negative in terms of what your staff are learning and experiencing in the realm of healthy relationships and/or and sexuality... _____

Action Research Part 2: Synthesis

Ask staff to think to themselves:

Whenever we talk about these topics, a lot of personal experiences might come up. I want to give you all a moment of personal reflection time. What did this bring up for you? Think to yourself, were there any stories that came up for you from previous summers? Thinking about those stories and about what you heard from other people answering the questions, fill in the following prompt:

As a camp staff member, I would like to see more _____ and less _____ (give some examples, like “I’d like to see more staff conversations, more activities that give campers opportunity to talk about these issues, and less jokes about these topics, less late-night rowdiness)

Suggestions for synthesis:

- Have everyone share one “more_____ and less_____” with someone else.
- Have people walk around the room sharing “more _____ and less_____” with five other people.
- Have posters for people to write one list of “more” and one list of “less”