

Introduction: Camps have been very instrumental in the development of athletic talent for many years. It is our hope that through expert instruction, and the enrichment that is provided by a camp's environment, USA Ultimate, and its Affiliates can develop the next generation of ultimate athletes in the United States.

Section I: Counselors

Counselors are a key part of any camp that includes youth, athletes. Some counselors are also coaches, but knowledge of the game is not strictly required. The counselor should help provide for the safety of the players, and it can be a great way to become more involved in and learn about the sport.

Requirements

At least one counselor per group who is at least 21 years old must receive the "Green Light" from the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) background check. It is highly encouraged to have all counselors complete a background check from NCSI and receive a "Green Light".

At least 1 counselor per group must complete the SafeSport training at safesport.org. It is highly encouraged that all counselors complete the SafeSport training.

At least 1 counselor per group must complete the CDC's "Heads Up Safety" program. It is highly recommended that all counselors complete the CDC "Heads Up Safety" program.

USAU membership is suggested but not required for all counselors.

All counselors must sign a current year USAU liability waiver, either online or by completing a paper form and mailing it to USA Ultimate.

At least 1 onsite adult staff person per group of 25 must be CPR and first aid trained (2 per group of 50, etc.). It is suggested that this person also be a camp counselor, but the title and role is not important.

At least 1 onsite adult staff person per group of 50 must be AED certified (2 per group of 100, etc.). It is suggested that this person also be a camp counselor, but the title and role is not important.

Responsibilities

All Counselors:

- If in charge of coaching athletes in game play must be knowledgeable of the rules of ultimate.
- Must be registered as a counselor on the camp's USAU roster before the camp starts. Best practice is at least 2 weeks in advance, in order to allow time for background check completion.

- Must be informed of and be able to access the USAU Medical Authorization forms for all minors (or an approved school or organization form).
- Must be able to contact emergency and medical personnel.
- Must be in understanding and in compliance with the USA Ultimate Coaching Ethics Code.
- Must be in understanding of USAU’s Health, Safety and Liability requirements.
- Must be informed of The USA Ultimate Athlete Health and Safety Packet, USA Ultimate Organizer Health and Safety Packet: Managing a Safe Event, and Event Medical and Inclement Weather Plan Template. These forms provide further safety instruction and help with event planning.
- Must supervise all activities, prevent the destruction of fields, and communicate with a camp field director about weather policies and field use.

Counselor Age

Per American Camp Association (ACA) Standards

Counselors should be *at least* two years older than the camp participants with whom they work, especially if they are not yet 18 years of age and legal adults. An assistant counselor, a staff person working alongside and under the supervision of a counselor, may be less than 2 years older than the campers. It is recommended, whenever possible, for all staff to have a 2-year age gap.

The minimum age for a counselor is 16 years old. Each group should have a *head counselor* at least 18 year old or older who has completed a background check through NCSI with a “Green Light” determination.

Counselor Ratio

Per ACA standards: Based on participant ages, recommended counselor plus assistant counselor to participant ratios will vary as follows:

Counselor or Assistant Counselor	Max Participants per Counselor or Assistant	Age of Participants	Example
1	8	6 to 8 years old	1 counselor & 1 assistant counselor: 9 campers
1	10	9 to 14 years old	2 counselors: 11 campers
1	12	15 to 17 years old	1 counselor & 1 assistant counselor: 13 campers

Behavioral and Disciplinary Focus

Positive reinforcement and enforcement of fair play are pivotal to a counselor’s success. Remember that these are the Fundamentals and that the campers are either beginning to learn the sport or progressing in

their knowledge of the sport. Patience is the key to maintaining participant interest and developing successful, healthy athletes.

Camp counselors are expected to behave according to the General Principles of the USAU Coaching Ethics Code. Counselors are also expected to interact mostly with the campers during the camp. Counselors are allowed to interact with each other to handle different situations and to coordinate different aspects of the camp. However, counselors should not interact mostly with the other counselors; this is to ensure that each camper gets proper supervision from their counselor.

Section II: Camp Participants

The individuals who participate in USAU sanctioned camps have the opportunity to enrich their knowledge of the sport, develop new skills, and most importantly have fun. To ensure each participant's safety, note several common situations that a coach or counselor may face and who may be safe to play on the field at the same time.

Camp Games & Practices

Camp practices are divided into two types. Fundamental practice and Scrimmage practice.

Fundamental: A practice that focuses on throwing mechanics and accuracy, player movement and positioning footwork and placement, and the running of plays without the opposition and vice versa. A Fundamentals practice lacks the complete competitive offensive and defensive framework of a scrimmage or game.

Scrimmage: A counselor or coach controlled game with simulated plays involving both the offense and defense. Constructive instruction is implemented after each play or series of plays and the rules are utilized relatively fully, perhaps without strict enforcement. This enables participants to get the experience of a game-like environment without the possible performance pressure of full-fledged competition. Results may be tracked temporally, but the persistent importance of the results is unlikely.

Game: This is ultimate's most common competition setting, wherein the rules are fully enforced/executed and interference from coaches/counselors will be limited. A game itself may or may not be for recorded points, but it will afford the participants to experience the sport in a fully competitive environment.

*Participants may **scrimmage** and play **games** only with and/or against other camper participants of the appropriate skill level and body size. Whenever a coach or counselor is inserting themselves into a scrimmage or game situation, it should be to enhance the instruction of the campers with a focus and*

priority on the safety and experience of the campers before any competitive outcomes, such as completing throws or catches.

All participants are allowed to participate in **fundamental** practices and drills *regardless* of skill level or size of the other participants. This encourages collaboration between age groups and an increase in the activity's overall enrichment.

Discussion of ultimate's rules is encouraged before each game and scrimmage, in order to facilitate the game or scrimmage in running as smoothly as possible. The Spirit of the Game™, as a result, will be upheld with full player control, understanding of fair play, awareness and adherence to the rules and with proper support and empowerment of each participant to grow in his/her understand of these vital concepts to the sport of ultimate.

Requirements

- Camp participants or a parent/guardian for any minor are required to list all existing health conditions before participating in any activity.
- Signing of the annual Waiver of Liability form and a Medical Authorization Form naming the camp staff is required by a parent/guardian of all participants who are not yet 18 years of age. For a participant at least 18 years of age, he/she must sign the annual Waiver of Liability.
- Camp participants must wear appropriate attire (athletic wear, tennis shoes and/or cleats) in order to participate in any activity.

Bringing a refillable water bottle is *highly encouraged*.

Activities without adequate counselor supervision are prohibited.

Section III: Camp Provisions and Amenities

Water shall be made available during all activity periods for all participants. When using refillable water coolers, it is recommended that at least 1 water cooler be available and kept filled throughout periods of activity. A drink with sugar and electrolytes, such as Gatorade, is recommended to be made available in addition to water.

The availability and location of water and bathrooms at the camp field sites must be communicated to all camp participants before any practice or game begins. If the bathrooms are not immediately accessible from the fields, a counselor must accompany campers in at least groups of 2 or more to a restroom facility, avoiding one-on-one situations between any minor and an adult without a third party witness present.

All practices or games must occur on safe athletic fields with cones and/or safety buffers (minimum of 3 yards to equipment, 4 yards between fields, and 5 yards to hazards/padding).

When participants are throwing around, or during down time, have participants only throw discs to individuals who are making eye contact with them.

To prevent injury, each participant is required to wear athletic footwear (tennis shoes or cleats) at all times. A camper will not be allowed to participate without proper footwear.

If food is provided to participants, it must comply with local health standards and ordinances. Sealed and packaged foods are recommended to minimize hygiene concerns and to minimize transmission of food-borne pathogens.

The camp director must notify USA Ultimate headquarters in advance of any known changes in locations, dates or cancelations so that appropriate insurance coverage can be effected.

If ground transportation is being provided to or from a camp location, the driver of any vehicle must be in possession of a valid state-issued commercial driver's license in his/her name.

If any of the participants have any special dietary restrictions, camp organizers must be informed of the restrictions in advance of the camp date with sufficient time to make adequate accommodations.

Campers may only carry medications to the camp if such medications are used to treat a potentially life-threatening condition. Typically campers are only permitted to carry EPI-pens for risk of allergen exposure, inhalers for asthma and/or insulin delivery devices. Prior to the start of the camp, a guardian of a camper must disclose to camp staff the intention to bring an inhaler, EPI-pen, insulin device, or any over-the-counter medication.

With younger campers, the potential exists for a medical condition like an allergy or asthma to exist that may not have been exhibited prior to the camp to either the camper's parents/guardians or to a medical professional. Counselors should be watchful for campers who look uncomfortable and should communicate with and monitor these campers, reporting any area of concern to a guardian and/or medical professionals.

Each camp should have check in/out policies that comply with local legal code, assure adequate information about camper presence is tracked and communicated, and provide counselors with timely notifications. These policies should be communicated clearly to prospective campers and guardians.

Section IV: Health, Safety and Liability Requirements

Camps must adhere to the Health, Safety and Liability Requirements posted on the USA Ultimate website. Currently, these guidelines are accessible via the URL <http://www.usultimate.org/safety/>. Note that references to team members and captains should be understood with camps to apply to participants and counselors, respectively.

Be sure to also note the Youth Participation Requirements posted on the USA Ultimate website. Currently, those are accessible via the URL http://www.usultimate.org/youth_requirements/.

Section V: Overnight Camp Protocols

Definition of "Overnight Camp" per NYC guidelines:

A children's overnight camp shall mean a property consisting of a tract of land and any tents, vehicles, buildings or other structures that may be pertinent to its use, any part of which may be occupied by persons under 18 years of age for the purpose of outdoor or indoor organized activities and on which provisions are made for overnight occupancy of children.

Potable water must be provided to all participants and counselors for the duration of the event, in order to ensure safe and proper hydration. Potable water shall mean water used for human consumption, food preparation, hand washing, culinary, bathing or laundry purposes.

At each overnight camp, at least 1 counselor who is CPR and First Aid certified must be present at all times. If the number of participants is greater than 50, at least 1 counselor who is AED trained and certified must be present at all times.

Counselors must maintain a line of communication amongst each other to ensure participant safety.

The head counselor must undergo a camp orientation two weeks in advance, to ensure adequate familiarity with the camp's location and conditions.

If the camp is held at a location that lacks indoor bathroom facilities, then counselors must monitor all sewage disposals for the duration of the camp and ensure compliance with all local health codes.

All parents/guardians must be informed of the location of the camp and will be allowed private contact/communication with their children at established regular intervals before the ending of the camp.

If a child no longer wishes to participate in the camp, then the communication must be facilitated to notify parents/guardians.

All sleeping quarters will be divided up according to gender and will be allocated based upon the number of campers to be accommodated. There will be no males housed in the female quarters and no females housed in the male quarters.

Provisions will be made by the counselors to ensure adequate sleeping quarters for all campers. Additional sleeping bags and/or cots may be required, and if so, these will be transported to the camp location ahead of time.

Section VI: Recommended Tips and Resources

Before commencing with practices and drills, use an icebreaker to socialize the campers with each other. Building familiar relations between the campers will aid in collaboration and increase the enjoyment had by all of the participants. When considering how an overnight camp schedule should look, consult the camp schedule template.

An excellent icebreaker for starting an ultimate camp is the "Pass and Ask" icebreaker. To start, divide the participants into groups based on skill level and body size. An equal number of participants per group is recommended but not required. Have each group form a circle and give one participant per circle a disc. Tell this participant to say his/her name and one interesting thing about themselves before throwing the disc to another person across the circle from him/her who has not yet introduced him/herself. That participant will do the same. Repeat until each person has had a chance to introduce themselves.

Ask each group to come up with a team/group name to identify them before the first practice. This gives the participants the chance to be creative with a fun way to set themselves apart from the other groups. Names can then be used in all competitions.

Before each scrimmage or game have each team select one or two captains (depending on the size of the group) to lead stretching, and to provide positive energy to the team. The teams cannot select the same participants as captain more than once until all have been given a chance to lead, giving as many individuals as possible the chance to be a team captain. At the end of the camp have the participants discuss what values a captain brings to a team.

Each group should cycle through water breaks in order to give each team enough time to maintain proper nutrition and hydration. Provide fruit or granola bars to participants during water breaks to aid in participant nutrition. Be on the lookout for dehydrated participants. If a participant seems dehydrated, instruct him/her tell them to take a break to rehydrate.

Section VII: Works Cited

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