



To: Board of Park Commissioners

Date: June 14, 2012

From: Don Van Arsdale, Executive Director

Enclosure

SUBJECT: YOUTH PROGRAM AND SUMMER CAMP SAFETY UPDATE

BACKGROUND:

Staff was asked to review our safety protocols in light of an occurrence that happened in a preschool enrichment class last month and a request from the parents of the child involved. The request also included reviewing all safety procedures used at our summer camps. This review was conducted by administrative staff with input from PDRMA, an outside security/safety consultant and our General Counsel.

Attached to this memo is a copy of our 2012 Summer Camp Operations Manual. While there is a theme of safety and safe practices throughout this manual, please refer to the specific safety-related sections listed below:

- Field Trips – page 10*
- Missing Child Procedures – page 12*
- Beach Days and Special Events – page 14
- Cookouts – page 14
- Safety Precautions – page 16
- Injuries and First Aid – page 18

*Section was provided by general counsel

This report will present our findings and actions (both proposed and in-place) in the following four areas:

- Safety Procedures
- Communication
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Training



I. Safety Procedures

Findings:

- Many of the existing procedures were appropriate and were not modified.
- Variations existed in the dissemination of staff training information.
- Variations existed in the monitoring and enforcement of procedures within and across departments.

Necessary actions:

1. Our priority was to review and revise our camp training materials to ensure we were prepared for summer camp. Within the next 30 days, we will begin reviewing our preschool and recreation training materials to make sure they are consistent as well. Additionally, the Operations Department will look at their recreational programs and activities to ensure they approach safety in a consistent manner.
2. We are in the process of training and retraining district personnel to make sure they are using our most current safety procedures.
3. We will develop a District-wide schedule for on-going training. This schedule will be administered by the Safety Committee.
4. We will annually review our training materials to make sure they are up-to-date. This training will be conducted under the auspices of the Safety Committee and revisions will become part of new manuals and training protocols.

II. Communication

Findings:

- Communication regarding training and communication with our customers needed significant improvements.
- Variations existed in reporting procedures within and across departments.

Necessary Actions:

1. A Communications Plan will be developed detailing the notification process in the event of a safety incident.
2. Teachers, managers and executive staff will receive standardized training on reporting procedures via the Communications Plan.
3. Communications Plan Training will emphasize the need to provide immediate, specific and accurate information to supervisors, the Board, and the parents of the all children involved in an incident.
4. Reporting forms are being modified for all our programs.



5. We will keep a safety incident log in our HR department which will be reviewed monthly at the Safety Committee meetings.
6. We will monitor the safety incident log for reoccurring incidents and determine whether additional procedures/action is needed based on frequency of incidents.
7. The District will continue to use its 10 member staff Safety Committee to make sure that all safety procedures remain up to date. The Safety Committee will continue to meet monthly to discuss and review various District safety matters and review safety procedures as necessary.

III. Disciplinary Procedures

Findings:

- The District has formal verbal and written disciplinary forms and procedures.
- Staff completed a thorough review of these forms and procedures and found them to be appropriate and complete, but found training inconsistencies.

Necessary Actions:

1. HR will conduct an annual review of the district's disciplinary forms and procedures and update as needed.
2. HR will conduct an annual training on disciplinary procedures to ensure procedures are implemented and enforced consistently throughout the District.

IV. Training

Findings:

- The District has a commitment to safety (as evidenced by our outstanding score on our PDRMA review) and has numerous effective procedures in place.
- Safety training has not been consistent throughout the different management areas of the District.

Necessary Actions:

1. We will be devoting considerable time and resources to in-service and staff training programs and activities designed to educate and inform personnel as to the District's safety plans, procedures, and staff responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment.
2. There will be training for all appropriate staff on child supervision, head counts, transitions, and missing child procedures, and communications.
3. We will identify a person who will be in charge of monitoring training throughout the district and auditing its effectiveness. This person will report the audit findings to the Safety Committee. This feedback may result in additional safety procedure modifications.



V. Highlighted Actions to Date:

1. Staff received and reviewed safety procedures and information from the District's General Counsel, PDRMA and an outside safety consultant for procedures that were relevant to the park district.
2. Staff purchased walking ropes with rings to be used for all preschool and kindergarten excursions. Note: Staff put these tools to use immediately upon receiving them.
3. Staff purchased whistles for all program staff and camp staff to be used to signal participants an activity is ending and to go to their counselor/teacher for a headcount before moving on to the next activity.
4. A full-time park district staff member will accompany all preschool and kindergarten excursions.

DVA

