SUMMER 2027

THE H.E.R.O PROGRAM

"HONORING EVERYONE -- RESPECTING OURSELVES"

The H.E.R.O. Program: “Honoring Everyone – Respecting Ourselves” Friendly Pines commits itself to one of the oldest and most valued ideals. We want to ensure that Friendly Pines Camp is a place where each of its nearly 1,000 (total) campers and staff will be guaranteed the kindness, respect and acceptance that everyone deserves. Of course, in order to achieve this goal, we will need to encourage and help each of our campers and staff to develop the practices of kindness, respect, and tolerance toward one another until it becomes a habit – a way of life. The HERO program asks campers and parents to embrace some basic, “Golden Rule” kinds of ideals.

Sit down as a family and review the sample agreement below. Discuss the ideas; digest them. On the first day of camp, each cabin will review and discuss the HERO program; afterwards, every member of the camp community will be asked to sign and commit to a HERO Agreement. This copy is for you to hang on your refrigerator (or wherever it is you display your most important family documents) as a constant reminder of what will be expected of each one of us. As always, please call if you have questions or concerns. The HERO program is a reflection of Friendly Pines’ long history of high standards and expectations.

I WILL OBEY THE LONG-STANDING NPC RULE AT FRIENDLY PINES CAMP.

NPC means “No Personal Contact” and it means that “I must keep myself to myself” – hands, feet, flying elbows, *everything*.

I WILL FOLLOW THE OLD ADAGE THAT SAYS, “IF YOU CAN’T SAY SOMETHING NICE, DON’T SAY ANYTHING AT ALL.”

In fact, I will take it a step further and make an effort to find nice things to say. I know how good it makes me feel to be praised and complimented or to have someone simply say “Hello,” and I will do my best job of spreading those good feelings myself!

I WILL AVOID ALL “PUT-DOWNS”, TEASING, AND SARCASTIC REMARKS.

Even making a playful joke about someone can be hurtful. If I need to make a joke about someone, maybe I’ll just make it about myself.

I WON’T GANG UP ON ANOTHER PERSON.

We all want to feel like we belong, and nothing is worse than being mocked or made to feel left out. I won’t let that happen to any of my cabin mates.

I’LL BE MORE TOLERANT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM ME.

Instead of immediately making fun of an idea I’ve never heard of, I’ll take the time to give it some thought. I don’t want to be the kind of person who slams the door on new ideas and different ways of looking at things. (Might try new foods, even!)

I’LL DO A BETTER JOB OF VALUING THE THINGS IN LIFE THAT ARE REALLY IMPORTANT.

Nature, friendship, and what’s in a person’s heart – those are the things that last. The brand of shoes that a person wears or the music they listen to will always go in and out of style. So I’ll not judge people from the surface and I’ll take time to get to know each one of my fellow campers deep down inside.

I WILL USE CAMP-APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE & ONLY DISCUSS APPROPRIATE TOPICS.

I will not use crude, obscene, vulgar or any other unacceptable conduct or language that may be hurtful. This is to include language that is offensive to others on the basis of gender, race, religion, lifestyle, physical characteristics, etc. And I’ll expect the same from others.

I WILL BE THERE TO PROTECT MY CABIN MATES FROM UNKIND ATTACKS AND ABUSE.

I’ll say “OUCH” when I hear a “put-down”, even when it’s not directed at me. And if the unkindness, bullying or teasing doesn’t stop, I’ll make sure my counselor knows about it. I’ll do this for my fellow campers and I’m confident they’ll do the same for me.

FINALLY, I WILL REMEMBER THAT GOING TO CAMP IS A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE AND A PRIVILEGE THAT MY FAMILY HAS KINDLY MADE AVAILABLE TO ME.

I will also keep in mind that going to camp is a privilege. So if I don’t keep my promise to be a H.E.R.O., I understand that I will need to speak with Adam and that he will speak to my family. And if after all that, I still fail to improve, and my conduct makes camp an unpleasant experience for my cabin mates, I may be sent home early.