Creating Happier and Healthier Camp Communities

When staff and campers become fatigued, they tend to experience higher rates of illness and injury. Staff need to understand how fatigue can impact performance.

Camp is very safe! But...

- 21% of camper injuries happen during sports or games
  Injury rate per camper is less than 1 injury per 1,000 days spent at camp

- Working without sleep mimics the effects of working under the influence of alcohol

- 25% of staff injuries occur between days 5 and 7 of a camp session
  Fatigue and less attention to safety may play a role

Fatigue is a long-term experience that slowly worsens
Fatigue ≠ sleepy

- 39% of camper injuries are to legs, ankles, and feet
- Proper footwear is critical to preventing injuries

Strategies to reduce fatigue

1. Structure time off to encourage rest
   Consider scheduling time off so staff have a morning to sleep in after a night off

2. Incorporate shift work, especially for nurses
   Lack of back up staff with medical training is a significant contributor to fatigue

3. Increase restful periods
   Offer staff the opportunity to slow down during work time; when scheduling responsibilities, balance active and passive roles

4. Provide social support for staff
   Access to peer mentors, spending time with leadership staff, and napping spaces can help mitigate fatigue

Unique considerations for camps

- Culture
  Does your camp culture value being rested? Or is exhaustion a sign of dedication?

- Space
  Personal space and privacy are limited at camp. How can you allow for solitude?

- Novelty
  Camp life is very different from home. How are staff prepared for this adjustment?

- Technology
  Access to technology is often limited at camp. How can you help staff cope?