



Willow Brook Farm
1070 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746

**Summer Camp Program
Child Abuse Policy**

In the event a camper discloses that he/she has been abused, it is important that the staff know how to react calmly, lend support and not further traumatize child victims.

Staff should:

- a. Listen calmly and carefully, noting the child's behavior. Don't ask leading questions.
- b. Believe the child. Don't criticize or suggest the child is mistaken. It isn't the staff's responsibility to determine whether or not the child is telling the truth.
- c. Protect the child's privacy and assure the child you will see that he/she gets help. Don't make promises, however, about what will or will not happen.
- d. Affirm the child's feelings and assure the child that what happened was not his/her fault.
- e. Refer the case to the camp director who will report it to the authorities.

The procedure for reporting any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect are as follows:

- a. All staff shall immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect. The report shall be made to the camp director.
- b. The camp director shall immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services.
- c. The camp director shall notify the Board of Health of a 51A Report alleging abuse or neglect of a child in the care of Willow Brook Farm.

Willow Brook Farm shall cooperate in all official investigations of abuse and neglect alleged to have occurred at the camp, including identifying of parents of campers currently or previously enrolled in the camp who may have been in contact with the subject of investigation.

Willow Brook Farm shall ensure that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff person does not work directly with campers until the Massachusetts Department of Social Services' investigation is completed.

Following this procedure does not mean the counselor or staff person is guilty. It only means that the camp director is protecting him/her, as well as the camper until a more thorough investigation has been conducted.