



PO Box 428 Banner Elk, NC 28604
info@holstoncenter.org; www.holstoncenter.org
844-465-7866 phone

Holston Camp's Statement of Inclusivity

Holston Camp strives to create a fully inclusive culture and environment that values equality and fosters respect for all people. We understand Christian spirituality as a shared journey from which no one should be excluded. In alignment with our values, vision and mission, Holston Camp welcomes all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, as guests and as full participants in all our programs.

Youth is a time of exploration and identity formation. We aim to help campers consider what it means to live a Christian life and how God is working in them, at Holston Camp, and in the world. We encourage our campers to develop self-confidence, embrace their creativity, explore their surroundings and create relationships with those that may be different from them.

During childhood and adolescence, deeply held aspects of identity like one's gender or sexual orientation can be questioned. Children and youth's exploration of their identities and interests is a normal part of their development. That's why we believe that it is essential to allow children to consider different identities in a safe and affirming environment. Holston Camp embraces diversity and we welcome all children to camp and hope that through their experience, they will discover more about the person they want to become.

The arc of scripture and the work and witness of Jesus Christ support accepting people as they are. There are people in scripture who defy gender norms and are accepted--the eunuch who was baptized by Philip and is credited with starting the church in Ethiopia (Jesus also called for acceptance of eunuchs) and Deborah, the female judge and warrior. Just as Jesus called for the acceptance of these individuals, Holston Camp welcomes all LGBTQ people to participate fully in our programs with this statement of inclusivity.

Question and Answer: Holston Camp's Transgender Policy

Who determines the gender of Holston Camp campers?

The parent or guardian determines the gender of the child and submits this during the registration process.

Which bathroom do campers use?

Campers use the bathroom that corresponds with their expressed gender. Any camper who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single user restroom. However, no camper shall be required to use such a restroom because they are transgender or gender nonconforming. If another child, or a parent of another child, expresses discomfort with sharing space with an LGBTQ youth, that child can use a separate, private space. The LGBTQ young person should be allowed to use the facilities they are comfortable with. The burden of prejudice should never rest on the child who is the target of that prejudice.

How are campers housed at Holston Camp?

Campers typically sleep in lodging according to their gender. Note: There is not a "one-size-fits-all" housing policy for transgender or gender non-conforming youth. It is vitally important to openly communicate with the youth about their needs and desires in order to create the best solution. Some transgender youth may feel more comfortable housing with the gender that correlates with their full time presentation and identity, while others feel more comfortable with their biological sex. Some may want to room with a few select friends and some, if given the option, may prefer their own room. Again, it is important to work with the youth to create a reasonable accommodation that best suits everyone. If parents of another camper or another camper expresses discomfort with sharing space with an LGBTQ youth, staff should look for other lodging options so that child can be housed in another space.

How does Holston Camp address privacy when it comes to changing clothes, showering and swimwear?

Holston Camp requires that all campers change clothes in private areas and discourages nudity or disrobing directly in front of staff or other campers. All our showers are single occupancy and each has a private undressing/dressing area where campers can have privacy while changing and showering. Our swimwear policy allows campers to be comfortable, while covering private areas. Campers may wear clothing over the top of their swimsuit if they choose.

Will Holston Camp inform parents of campers if their children are assigned to the lodging area as a transgender camper?

Simply put, no. Campers are always supervised at Holston Camp so there are not any apparent safety concerns or legal issues related to a boy camper assigned female at birth sleeping in the same room as other boy campers, and vice versa.

How do these policies relate to summer staff?

We fill staff vacancies and assign staff lodging/counseling responsibilities based on summer staff applicants self-selected gender.

Is it required for a parent/guardian to disclose to Holston Camp staff upon registering that their child is transgender?

It is not required that a parent/guardian inform Holston Camp staff that their child is transgender. However, Holston Camp prefers that parents, if comfortable, indicate that their camper is transgender when they register for camp. Being made aware of a transgender camper will allow our staff to be prepared so we can put forth our best efforts to help the child have a positive experience at camp.

Which Holston Camp staff members will be made aware of a transgender camper?

Staff will not discuss the gender of a camper in any situation where it is not pertinent or appropriate to do so. (Calling attention to something that is particularly EXCLUSIVE is not in keeping with the INCLUSIVE nature of the camp environment we create.) Only the staff noted below will be made aware a particular camper is transgender and this information will remain confidential, as would specific medical information for any camper. Directors and volunteer nurses will be notified of any camper that identifies as transgender. Other staff that relate directly to the camper will also be notified (the child's counselors and the Summer Program Director for the group). When referring to a camper/guest/staff member, staff and campers should use preferred pronouns that reflect the gender the camper/guest/staff member identifies with when not using the person's name.

How will staff be informed of this policy and be prepared to host a transgender camper?

Staff training will include a session regarding transgender campers. This policy will be discussed, along with rationale and training for providing transgender campers (and every camper) with an emotionally and physically safe environment.

Holston Camp's Transgender Policy

The bulleted list below represents Holston Camp's policy regarding transgender guests, campers and staff.

- The parent or guardian determines the gender of any child and in the case of Holston Camp's facilitated programs, submits this during the registration process. Adults determine their own gender.
- Guests/Staff/Campers use the bathroom that corresponds with their gender. Any guest/staff/camper who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single user restroom. However, no guest/staff/camper shall be required to use such a restroom because they are transgender or gender nonconforming. If another camper and/or a parent of another camper expresses discomfort with sharing space with an LGBTQ youth, that child/person can use a separate, private space.
- At Holston Camp, campers typically sleep in lodging areas according to their gender. Note: There is not a "one-size-fits-all" housing policy for transgender or gender non-conforming youth. It is vitally important to openly communicate with the youth about their needs and desires in order to create the best solution. Some transgender youth may feel more comfortable housing with the gender that correlates with their full time presentation and identity, others with their biological sex. Some may want to room with a few select friends and some, if given the option, may prefer their own room. Again, it is important to work with the youth to create a reasonable accommodation that best suits everyone.
- Holston Camp requires that all guests/campers/staff change clothes in private areas and discourages nudity or disrobing directly in front of others.
- All our showers are single occupancy and each has a private undressing/dressing area where guests/staff/campers can have privacy while changing and showering. Our swimwear policy allows campers to be comfortable, while covering private areas. Campers may wear clothing over the top of their swimsuit if they choose.
- Campers are always supervised at Holston Camp so there are not any apparent safety concerns or legal issues related to children of opposite sex sleeping in the same room.
- Holston Camp fills staff vacancies and assigns staff lodging/responsibilities based on summer staff applicants self-selected gender.
- When referring to a camper/guest/staff member, staff and campers should use preferred pronouns that reflect the gender the camper/guest/staff member identifies with when not using the person's name.
- It is not required that a parent/guardian inform Holston Camp staff that their child is transgender. However, Holston Camp prefers that parents, if comfortable, indicate that their camper is transgender when they register for camp. Being made aware of a transgender camper will allow our staff to be prepared so we can put forth our best effort to aid the child have a positive experience at camp.

- Staff will not discuss the gender of a camper in any situation where it is not pertinent or appropriate to do so. (Calling attention to something that is particularly EXCLUSIVE is not in keeping with the INCLUSIVE nature of the camp environment we create.) Only the staff noted below will be made aware a particular camper is transgender and this information will remain confidential, as would specific medical information for any camper. Directors and volunteer nurses will be notified of any camper that identifies as transgender. Other staff that relate directly to the camper will also be notified (the child's counselors and the Unit Coordinator for the group).
- Staff training will include a session regarding transgender campers. This policy will be discussed, along with rationale and training for providing transgender campers (and every camper) with an emotionally and physically safe environment.