

**LD**

**free  
zone**

**A “D” is a statement or action that:**

**Demeans**

**Destroys**

**Discourages**

**Disses**

**Devastates**

**Drains**

**Discounts**

**Dumps on**

**Puts Down**

**Diminishes**

**Degrades**

**Disrespects**

**Someone else, an activity, or yourself.**

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

*Jeremiah 29:11-13*

This is the Message from God, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your prayer. He says, ‘If you are ready to stick it out in this land, I will build you up and not drag you down, I will plant you and not pull you up like a weed.

*Jeremiah 42:10*

But he’s already made it plain how to live, what to do,  
what God is looking for in men and women. It’s quite simple:

Do what is fair and just to your neighbor,

Be compassionate and loyal in your love,

And don’t take yourself too seriously—  
take God seriously.

*Micah 6:8*

# No D's

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## What's a D?

***A statement or action that Demeans, Disses, Discounts, Diminishes, Destroys, Devastates, Dumps on, Degrades, Drains, puts Down or Disrespects someone else, an activity or yourself.***

## Why not D?

- ❖ When we put down someone else, that leaves a lasting scar emotionally.
- ❖ When we put down an activity, we make others feel less sure of themselves if they enjoy that activity.
- ❖ Negativity brings on more negativity.
- ❖ When we put ourselves down, we fall into a negative spiral where we truly believe we aren't capable of accomplishing something – the more we tell ourselves we are no good, the more we believe it.
- ❖ Our goal at camp is to promote the growth of mutual respect.

## How do I stop the campers from using D's?

Establish the No D's rule in your camp covenant.

Say "That's a D!" every time a negative comment is made – this leads to the campers calling each other and you on any negative comments made. (If you are silent when D's are said, the campers might think you agree with the comment made – ALWAYS say "that's a D!")

When you say "That's a D," position yourself in front of the camper to gain his/her eye contact, bend to be at their eye level, and speak slowly and using a low voice. Be firm and serious. – Explain why a D is not okay.

Ask the camper to apologize to the camper he or she said the D to.

Have campers use positive comments in reference to themselves. – Instead of "I'm stupid," try "I want to learn how to do this..."

## Why is a D-Free Zone necessary?

We need to establish an emotionally safe environment for campers to grow in faith and enjoy the summer camp experience. Campers can only accomplish such things when they believe in themselves and enjoy being a part of their unit.

Identifying a behavior is the first step to changing that behavior. By calling attention to the negative comments made, we make such behavior visible and help show such things should not go unnoticed since comments of that sort are not okay.

## Campers' reactions and ways to respond...

*“You’re stupid!”*

**Sometimes campers use a D because they don’t agree with someone:**

- ❖ Teach the campers how to disagree
- ❖ Use phrases such as “I disagree...” or “I don’t think that’s right...”
- ❖ Encourage discussion rather than arguments.

*“I don’t care,”*

**Sometimes a camper says a D and tells you that they don’t care about how someone else feels.**

- ❖ Know that when a camper says, “I don’t care,” they may mean this literally.
- ❖ “I don’t care” is often used to avoid embarrassment when the camper knows he or she was wrong in the first place.
- ❖ Ask the camper to tell you why they don’t care. Sit in silence for a bit if necessary to get the camper to share with you what they feel.
- ❖ Tell the camper that being a part of the group means caring about everyone in it and reinforce that that means No D’s.

*“I’m just kidding!” – “Joe knows I’m kidding. We’re friends.  
I say that to him all the time.”*

**Sometimes Humor is Hurtful**

- ❖ Joe may even tell you he doesn’t mind – but as staff, we need to recognize that campers may say they don’t mind being put down, when actually, they do mind.
- ❖ Explain that D’s are not appropriate at camp (things are different here!) and that while they are here, we’d like them to treat each other with respect.
- ❖ Explain that while they might know the other is kidding, others around them might not and will then think it is okay to D others around them.

**Sometimes, the camper who get’s D’d is really hurt**

- ❖ Sit with the camper and let them talk to you about how they feel.
- ❖ Actively listen and when the opportunity is there, explain that the only opinion that really matters is how we feel about ourselves.
- ❖ Sometimes a person who D’s is not happy about themselves, and pushes that negativity onto another.

*“No one can make us feel inferior without our consent.” - Eleanor Roosevelt.*