



# THE GREEN TEAM

A Guide to Getting Started

Green Camps wants to help any camp model sustainability and our experience has shown that the best way to create long lasting outcomes is by forming a Green Team.

Members who join Green Camps complete 5 steps to become certified, but you don't have to be a member to get started.

Use this guide to get started on the first step, forming a Green Team.

## SCHEDULE A DISCOVERY MEETING

### BRING KEY DECISION MAKERS INTO THE PROCESS.

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- Brainstorm a list of people/organizations who could bring financial, technical, educational and other volunteer support to make your Green Team Successful.
  - Camp Staff
  - Board Members
  - Government Officials
  - Teachers
  - College Students
  - Plumbers/Electricians
  - Utility Companies
  - Business Owners
- Who else might be a good fit to join your Green Team?

### SEND AN EMAIL TO INVITE POTENTIAL GREEN TEAM MEMBERS (TEMPLATE EMAIL)

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Dear [Recipients Name],

“Going green” and “being sustainable” can be vague and intimidating terms. We all know we need to do more to live sustainably, but how? To explore this question, *(Camp Name)* is forming a Green Team to expand our efforts to better model sustainability and inspire green behavior change in our campers and staff.

I'd like to invite you to join myself and other supporters of *(Camp Name)* for a virtual meeting to start a conversation about the benefits sustainability can bring to our campers, staff, programs and facilities. We'd love to have you join the meeting to see if joining *(Camp Name's)* Green Team would be of interest to you.

Even if you decide not to join *(Camp Name's)* Green Team, we'd love to have you join this preliminary meeting so that we might benefit from your knowledge and advice. We will use the following questions to guide the meeting.

- What does sustainability mean to you?
- What are we already doing at camp that you would consider “sustainable”
- How does sustainability fit into the mission of our organization?
- In what ways will modeling sustainability benefit our camp, campers, camper families, etc..
- What are the “low hanging fruits” of green actions we can implement with limited time, money and other resources?
- What individuals or organizations could we bring in to support our green efforts?
- How can we include/engage campers and staff in the green team?

If you are interested in joining us, please let me know by responding to this email and I will include you in the follow up email to set a date/time for the virtual meeting.

*Your Signature*

### MEETING TOOLS

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Use a service like doodle (<https://doodle.com/>) to invite those who responded to find a time/date to schedule the meeting. You can use services like zoom, google meet or skype to host the meeting.

## THE FIRST MEETING

### GREEN TEAM BRAINSTORM

The goal of this meeting is to facilitate a conversation around sustainability to allow key stakeholders to share the challenges, opportunities and questions they have around making camp more sustainable.

Use the following questions to guide the conversation and be sure to assign someone to take notes.

- What does sustainability mean to you?
- Based on our definition of sustainability, what sustainable practices are already in place?
- What are the “low hanging fruits” of green actions we can implement with limited time, money and other resources?
- Do we have the support of top-level management? What other areas of support do we have?
- What individuals or organizations could we bring in to support our green efforts?
- In what ways will modeling sustainability benefit our camp, campers, camper families, etc..
- How can we include/engage campers and staff in the green team?
- Is anyone interested in leading our green team? Helping develop roles/responsibilities?
- What other questions/comments do you have?

### NEXT STEPS

1. Type up the notes from your meeting to provide an overview of what was discussed.
2. Formally invite those interested to join the Green Team
3. Schedule the next green team meeting to...
  - Choose a Green Team Lead
  - Create a statement of commitment to sustainability that fits within the mission of your organization
  - Brainstorm how to engage campers/staff
  - Create a vision for what you'd like your green team to accomplish in 2 years, 5 years, 10 years...
  - Develop proposals for a few simple green actions to implement at camp.
  - Outline a plan with milestones/deadlines associated with your goals and objectives.
4. Share!
  - Use your website, social media, blogs and newsletters to tell your campers, staff and other camp supporters about your efforts to model sustainability at camp!
  - Please tell Green Camps about your successes by sending us an email or tagging us on social media @gogreencamps

### OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some other resources, suggestions and other tools to help you continue to grow your green team to create the most benefit from your sustainability efforts.

Green Camps wants to help in this process and we would love to hear from you to see how we can support your efforts. Contact us: @gogreencamps [www.greencamps.org](http://www.greencamps.org) (704) 450-1901

## TOP 10 CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL GREEN TEAM

1. Support from the Top-Level Management
2. Representatives from all Departments of the Organization
3. Committed and Participative Members
4. Established Structure with Defined Meeting Time and Guidelines
5. Collaborative, welcoming ideas from all stakeholders
6. Shared Purpose and Goals
7. Defined Plan of Action to Achieve Goals
8. Project-focused rather than administration focused
9. Shares and Celebrates Successes
10. Creativity and the Ability to Make the Process Enjoyable

## CREATING PROJECT PROPOSALS

Use the following questions to create “proposals” of the activities you are interested in pursuing to get a better sense of the potential challenges and successes associated with each “Green Action”. Additionally, you will find it easier to present project ideas having done some initial research and data gathering.

- Project Name
- Project Description
- Why did you choose this project?
- What resources will be needed to implement the project? (Cost, Staff time, Materials, etc.)
- Are there other camps/organizations that have successfully implemented this project?
- Who can we reach out to for help with the project?
- How will we engage campers/staff with the project? (Activities, Signage, Programs, etc.)
- How will project success be measured?
- What are the intended outcomes of this project? (Cost Savings, Education, Demonstration, etc.)

## ENGAGE CAMPERS

Encourage **campers** to participate in the green team. The way in which campers can be engaged will vary based on your unique program. Consider the following suggestions for involving your campers.

- Ask campers to create a “Green Pledge”.
  - Consider how this could be used to engage campers throughout the year
- Campers can sign up to join a Camper Green Team for each session.
- Returning campers can model/teach new campers about camp sustainability policies/actions.
- Write letters to local newspapers and periodicals about camp sustainability.
- Energy/ Water Conservation contest between cabins.
- Create a camp sustainability presentation to give on parent’s day.
- Campers lead sustainability tours for visitors.
- Invite local green team campers to come to camp for special sustainability trainings and events.

## ENGAGE CAMP STAFF

Check out this blog from ACA Camping Magazine about how staff can influence green behavior change. <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/influencing-green-behavior-your-camp>

Invite existing and previous staff members to learn more about your camps Green Team and the vision of what you want to accomplish. The following list would most apply to in-person meetings, but you could also schedule a virtual meeting with current and past staff during the year to get the ball rolling sooner.

- **Food** is always a great way to bring people together and food service is a huge area of opportunity to implement green actions.
- **Team Building Activities** can be used to highlight the importance of critical thinking and problem-solving skills to create innovative “green” solutions.
- **Share** some of the goals your camp will be focusing on from your brainstorming meeting.
- **Invite** staff to attend future green team meetings to play an active role in participating and supporting camp’s sustainability efforts.

## START SMALL!

- A small group of dedicated staff members can help plan out the way in which your Green Team will function. Too many voices at the table will inhibit your team from being able to move forward.
- You can always come back and make changes to the Green Team, but you have to test it out before you have the information to know what changes to make.

## HOLD REGULAR MEETINGS

- Having regularly scheduled meetings will hold your Green Team members accountable for completing tasks associated with the Green Action you are working on.
- This will also ensure that progress is being made and allows the Team to meet to discuss the challenges and successes of the Action.
- It's okay to reschedule the meeting to accommodate the needs of the green team members and because it's a regular event, members will be able to do their best to plan their calendars around the meeting.

## INVOLVE BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE STAFF

- If they aren't already involved, do whatever you can to engage the people who take care of your facility and help with renovations and retrofits.
- They will be a great resource to help understand the application of green actions that impact water, energy and waste systems.
- Other support staff such as housekeeping can play a vital role in reporting dripping faucets and other issues that could be easily remedied.

## WHAT NEXT?

- Follow Green Camps on social media @gogreencamps
- Connect with other camp professionals on the ACA Connect Sustainability Thread.
- Attend sustainability education webinars and learning opportunities at conferences and events
- Share your sustainability knowledge by presenting at conferences and events.
- Tell the camping associations your associated with that you want to see sustainability made more of a priority to create more education around the topics you care about and to develop accreditation standards.
- Share your successes, challenges and lessons learned with the camp community to inspire others and demonstrate what sustainability looks like in the camp community.

## HOW CAN GREEN CAMPS HELP YOU?

- Participate in our outreach education offerings to learn more about the role sustainability can play in the camp community.
- Schedule a free phone consultation with Green Camps by emailing [hello@greencamps.org](mailto:hello@greencamps.org)
- Visit [www.greencamps.org](http://www.greencamps.org) to learn more about membership, certification and other resources we offer.

## GREEN CAMPS CERTIFICATION

Greening your camp doesn't have to be an overwhelming process. The Green Camps Certification was created to support you in laying the foundation to establish a framework for what sustainability means and looks like at your camp.

Green Camps initially launched an accreditation program that outlines best practices for sustainability specific to youth and outdoor education programs.

We realized this was a much bigger step than most camps were ready to take, so we launched Green Camps Certification. Becoming certified demonstrates your camp's commitment to sustainability by building buy-in and preparing your team to take the next steps to model sustainability at your organization.



# ACTIONS NEEDED TO COMPLETE GREEN CAMPS CERTIFICATION

## LAUNCH A GREEN TEAM

A team leader and team members will facilitate staff and campers through the process of “greening your camp” while creating a culture that embraces these new practices.

- \*Roster of Green Team members*
- \*Statement of Organizational commitment to sustainability*
- \*Notes from Green Team Meetings*

## CONSERVATION POLICY

Developing conservation policies will help set expectations for the role campers and staff can play in supporting a culture of sustainability at your camp.

- \*List of Conservation Policies*
- \*List of policy goals and desired outcomes*
- \*List of agreed upon roles and responsibilities of Green Team Members*
- \*Educational material to educate and enforce policies (Examples: Signage, Website page, Print Materials, etc.)*

## AUDIT SURVEYS

Answer questions about energy, water, waste and office conservation to begin establishing a baseline and learn more about the opportunities for implementing green actions.

- \*Completed audit survey submitted through the Green Camps Community*

## IMPLEMENT GREEN ACTIONS

We’ve put together a few ideas for green actions that are supported by the resources we’re developing to simplify the process of modeling sustainability at your camp.

- \*Images/Video documentation of Green Action*

## SHARE

Share your experience and lessons learned from the sustainable initiative you chose to implement. By submitting a case study of your green actions, you will be adding to an ever-expanding library of the challenges and successes of a great diversity of green actions being taken at camps around the country.

- \*Completed case study to highlight your initiative*

***\*Required Documentation to Complete Each Step***

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead*