



Camp Ramah's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

Harkening all the way back to Abraham and Sarah, Ramah is proud to maintain a big tent which welcomes a diverse community of ages, experiences, perspectives, and more. First, you will find a guide for families to prepare their children for a summer at Ramah which is followed by an overview of Ramah's values and approaches to diversity.

PREPARING CAMPERS FOR DIVERSITY AT RAMAH

We are sensitive to the fact that our campers come from a wide range of life experiences. For many campers, this will be one of their first opportunities to live in a communal setting with peers. We ask parents to talk with their campers in advance of the summer about the importance of being open to new friendships, especially with campers who might seem different from them. Summer after summer, we see friendships blossom out of such openness. At the same time, we ask that you remind your camper that they will be embraced by a loving community for exactly who they are.

A few talking points to get you started. Please encourage your camper to...

- Be open to meeting all kinds of wonderful kids, some of whom will become lifelong friends and others friendly acquaintances – but all deserving of kindness and respect.
- Be aware that each of us likely has something about ourselves that others might be interested in asking about, that we may not want to discuss. It is important to establish personal boundaries and imperative to respect the boundaries of others.

Turn to an adult in camp with any questions or concerns. Those adults include:

Madrichim
Counselors



Rashei Edah
Unit Heads

Yoatzot
Camper Care Team



Dr. Aviva Levine Jacobs
Director of Camper Care

Ariella Moss Peterseil
Camp Director



Rabbi Joe Menashe
Executive Director

Rory Carmer
Tikvah Director



Dr. Andrea Kasowitz
Marp Clinical Director





1) VALUE: JEWISH RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY:

While Ramah is proudly a Conservative Jewish Camp, our population reflects cohorts of diverse groups of Jews affiliating as Reform, Reconstructionist, Orthodox, Chabad, and other.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

While public observance of ritual practice will follow Conservative approaches, staff and campers alike will honor and respect diverse religious backgrounds and individual beliefs.



2) VALUE: FAMILY DIVERSITY:

Ramah welcomes and reflects families of all constellations which include: single parents, same-sex parents, divorced households, blended families, non-parent guardians, and everything in between.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

Ramah continues to improve its staff training, forms and procedures to enable all Ramah families to feel at home.



3) VALUE: LOVE FOR ISRAEL AND DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES:

From its inception, Camp Ramah has maintained Israel and Hebrew Language as central pillars of Jewish identity and education. The presence of Israeli campers and staff (*mishlachot*) each summer, is an enduring summer presence that impacts lifelong Ramah journeys.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

During these challenging times, we aim to have civil discourse about Israel, led with age-appropriate education and values. Ramah believes in infusing Ivrit and Israel experiential education into the camper and staff experience that reflects love for Israel. Although not a formal part of our curriculum, our commitment to civil discourse extends to include the topics of U.S. and global politics.



4) VALUE: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER DIVERSITY:

The Ramah community includes campers and staff of all sexual orientations and gender identities. With the recognition that gender identity and sexual orientation are distinct, Ramah seeks to simultaneously create a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ identified kids, staff, and parents.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

We achieve this by aiming to avoid heteronormative assumptions in our language and programming, and to expand our array of programming options for all campers. In our bunking process, our goal is to support a child or staff member's well-being, which may be deemed according to camp administration to include bunking according to gender identity, rather than birth sex in specific circumstances.



5) VALUE: CULTURAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY:

Ramah campers and staff include Jews of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds including Sephardic, Mizrahi, Ashkenazi, Israeli, Persian, Russian, Jews by choice, Jews of color, and more.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

Ramah seeks to be a home for Jews from all these diverse backgrounds, both as campers and as role models on staff. At Ramah, campers will learn about the diversity of the Jewish world through experiential education and create a culture of acceptance and celebration of traditions shared by Jews from around the world.



6) VALUE: NEURODIVERSITY:

Camp Ramah has long been a welcoming place to campers and staff with disabilities. This is a shining example of how communal diversity is enriching for all.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

Ramah maintains a commitment to further destigmatize differing abilities within and outside of the Tikvah community. We continue to find new ways to accommodate and support a broad range of needs of campers and staff throughout the camp experience and Ramah journey.



7) VALUE: FINANCIAL DIVERSITY:

Roughly 1/2 of ramah families require financial support to send their kids to camp, including 35-40% who receive Ramah financial aid.

RAMAH IN ACTION:

Ramah will continue to aggressively look for all means of making camp more affordable and accessible. We maintain needblind admissions and will continue to embrace camp families and campers irrespective of financial capacity. Our community will continue to elevate relationships over materialism as we strive to keep camp accessible and affordable.