

# WELCOMING ALL CAMPERS & STAFF

## URJ's Camp Newman's Statement of Inclusion

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Dear URJ Camp Newman Parents and Campers,

As you may know, at URJ Camp Newman we are committed to building a vibrant community rooted in Jewish values and bringing the transformative power of Jewish summer camp to every child and family who come through our gates. From our policies to our programs and camp norms, we strive to reflect the Union for Reform Judaism's (URJ) and our camp's core values:

### **Kehillah Kedoshah – A Holy Community**

We are a sacred community, responsible for one another.

### **V'ahavta L'reyecha – Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself**

We should behave towards one another with love and kindness.

### **Hachnasat Orchim – Welcome the Stranger**

Camp is a place of "audacious hospitality," where all who enter are celebrated.

### **Yichut Atsmo – Personal Growth**

Camp is a uniquely transformative opportunity for young people to take risks and grow, and our job at Camp is to nurture that growth.

Every summer at camp brings new opportunities to apply our values to day-to-day life at camp. **Each summer at Camp Newman, we welcome transgender campers and staff into the cabin with which they identify.**

These campers and their families have been engaged in a process of their social transition. Their decisions were made with the advice and support of their pediatricians in consultation with a wide range of medical professionals. They have been embraced by their schools and congregational communities. While this process can seem challenging, we recognize that these children and their families are committed to it because it's the right thing for them and for Camp Newman.

### **In-Cabin Staff**

Based on our dedication to inclusion, we house staff members according to the gender with which they identify. We have set up processes to ensure that both campers and staff understand one another and have the opportunity to ask questions. Our Nefesh (camper care) staff are always available and often take part in conversations at the beginning of a session to help set everyone up for success.

We want to assure you that this decision was based on a thoughtful, deliberate process that started when we began thinking about how to welcome our first transgender camper to camp.

This may be a new experience for some. We know there are conversations you'll want to have with your child and important questions of your own you'll want answered. If you have not done so already, we strongly encourage you to start those conversations now.

This summer, when your child arrives at camp, you'll find Camp Newman the same place you have come to love – a sacred community and your child's home away from home. We are grateful for your support,

understanding, and compassion as we live out our Jewish values with the warmth and joy that are the hallmarks of the Union for Reform Judaism and the URJ Camp Newman community.

Our Camp Director, Rabbi Allie Fischman, is happy to address any of your questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact Rabbi Allie at [afischman@urj.org](mailto:afischman@urj.org) or 415-991-0326. We are so excited to welcome your camper to camp!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Allie Fischman  
Camp Director

Ruben Arquilevich  
Executive Director

Michelle Tandowsky  
Chair, Advisory Board

Rabbi Paul Kipnes  
Dean, Camp Newman Faculty