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March 7, 2022

Mr. Joe White  
CEO, Kanakuk Kamps  
1353 Lake Shore Drive  
Branson, MO 65616

### **Re: Kanakuk Kamps on 2022 Dirty Dozen List**

Dear Mr. White,

Despite many child sexual abuse survivors who have come forward, at least a dozen lawsuits, and several news investigations uncovering neglectful practices that allowed reported abuse to continue at your camp, Kanakuk has continued to minimize the reality that they have allowed abuse to flourish. For this reason, the National Center on Sexual Exploitation will name Kanakuk Kamps to the 2022 Dirty Dozen List which features major facilitators of sexual abuse and exploitation. This list will be announced to the public on March 8, 2022.

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation is a non-partisan, non-profit based in Washington, DC, dedicated to addressing the full spectrum of sexual harms and fighting for a world where everyone can live and love free of exploitation.

Through litigation, public policy changes, corporate advocacy, and educating and equipping the public, we seek to stem the sexual harms that fester within institutional settings. Too often, institutions and systems designed to foster safety and community for children choose profit and reputation over protection of those over whom they have charge. The price of this disordered prioritization is the innocence, dignity, and well-being of countless children...and the adults they become...as well as their families and loved ones who are also deeply harmed by these crimes.

Responsibility, accountability, and transparency must be required of institutions like Kanakuk Kamps if we wish to stamp out the epidemic of child sexual abuse.

Between April – June 2021, following a blog we published about institutional sexual abuse at Kanakuk, the National Center on Sexual

Exploitation was contacted by three survivors of sexual abuse allegedly taking place at Kanakuk.

One survivor we spoke with said that finally at age 70 he was sharing what happened to him for the first time when he was a young counselor at the camp. Another was a dad of young boys who was abused as a “kamper” while a young teen, and he spoke about the fear he now has for his young sons.

These personal conversations with survivors – together with deeper investigative reports we have seen in the Dispatch, CBS 11, and Vice News – have raised deep concerns at NCOSE. We had hoped that Kanakuk would respond to these public disclosures with humility, acknowledging its own role in allowing child sexual abuse to persist due to poor policies and practices. Yet, your responses have only recognized abuse by one person at Kanakuk, ignoring the allegations of abuse by a number of other Kanakuk staff, and have not taken accountability for the role Kanakuk played in allowing such abuse to continue, despite numerous accounts of reporting directly to leadership.

We also expected Kanakuk to work with the survivors who feel they cannot move forward in their healing journey because of the one-sided non-disclosure agreements they (or their parents) were pressured to sign that force them into silence. Kanakuk is now claiming it is ok with these survivors sharing their stories, but is refusing to advocate with its own insurance companies to allow it as well.

The recent letter from you to survivors of horrific abuse at your camps is focused on your own experiences and the feelings you have felt as you have had to hear their stories. This completely misses the mark if it was meant to be an apology.

The responses from Kanakuk have downplayed these survivors’ experiences, there continues to be no transparency on how many reports you receive, and only vague explanations regarding current efforts to prevent child sexual abuse at your camps.

We have twice requested to review your full child protection policy via the email on your website indicated for comments and complaints of child sexual abuse – [cpp@kanakuk.com](mailto:cpp@kanakuk.com). Our requests have gone unanswered.

As you have not prioritized preventing and addressing sexual abuse at the hands of trusted adults within your organization in the past, The National Center on Sexual Exploitation is also concerned about how child-on-child harmful sexual behavior is dealt with at Kanakuk. This behavior is tragically on the rise nationally (and globally), with nearly 1/3 of reported arrests to the Department of Justice for child sexual abuse being of minors who acted out on another child. We hope that you are taking extensive precautions at this time to prevent this type of behavior as well. We are open to serving as expert advisors on this tragic issue and to guide Kanakuk in preventing and appropriately responding to such behavior.

For National Center on Sexual Exploitation to consider formally removing Kanakuk Kamps from the Dirty Dozen List, we request that you:

1. Issue an **annual transparency report regarding allegations of sexual abuse**, including child-on-child harmful sexual behavior, with descriptions as to how Kanakuk responded.
2. Partially **release survivors from non-disclosure agreements** they or their family members were pressured to sign in favor of protecting Kanakuk Kamps, so that they may further their healing and restoration progress by being free to speak about the childhood sexual abuse they endured at your institution.

3. **Humbly acknowledge Kanakuk Kamp's role in the decades of sexual abuse** and the insufficient efforts to prevent such abuse with adequate practices and policies.
4. **Proactively share Kanakuk's full child protection policies with prospective parents and the general public** by posting them on the website and including them with promotional material.

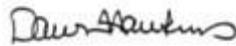
As one of the largest and most well-known Christian camps in America, Kanakuk Kamps has a moral obligation to confront the extensive harms that have been committed *for decades* against innocent children under your care...grave harms that could have been prevented had Kanakuk leadership cared more about the children than they did for their reputation. Until Kanakuk accepts responsibility, implements substantive policy changes, and proactively alerts parents about past transgressions, current practices, and possible risks, the National Center on Sexual Exploitation will continue to warn the general public about Kanakuk.

Should you or anyone from your leadership team care to discuss these issues further, you may contact us at [public@ncose.com](mailto:public@ncose.com).

Respectfully,



Patrick Trueman, Esq.  
President



Dawn Hawkins  
CEO