

Subject: Re: Questions regarding child sexual abuse
Date: Friday, February 11, 2022 at 3:27:53 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Dawn Hawkins
To: cpp@kanakuk.com
CC: Lina Nealon
Attachments: image001.jpg

I am following up on this request.

Best,

Dawn Hawkins
National Center on Sexual Exploitation

P.S. [Recent victories and progress here—you'll be encouraged!](#)

From: Dawn Hawkins <dawn@ncose.com>
Date: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 2:55 PM
To: cpp@kanakuk.com <cpp@kanakuk.com>
Cc: Lina Nealon <lnealon@ncose.com>
Subject: Questions regarding child sexual abuse

To Whom It May Concern:

We have concerns about the way Kanakuk Kamps is handling ongoing reports of child sexual abuse. This year, I have personally spoken with two survivors of abuse that they say happened at your camp— one was in his 70s and the other in his 20s – who reached out to our organization.

May we review your full child protection policy? The website only highlights parts of it. Has your child protection policy been updated in the past 2 years? As a mother, I request to see such policies of all camps my children attend and it has never been a problem to get a copy.

Based on your website, you claim to have a reporting process when sexual misconduct or child sexual abuse occurs or is suspected. Are you willing to be transparent publicly about how many such complaints you receive and of the nature of the complaints? Many corporations are finally being honest about these numbers and how they deal with these reports, with Uber and Lyft being some of the more recent. We ask Kanakuk to follow suit and to be honest and transparent about these issues. We know that Pete Newman is not the only predator who has acted out on kids at your camp, yet he is the only one you are willingly naming.

How many reports of child-on-child harmful sexual behavior have you received and how are you dealing with these cases?

Thank you for your response,



Dawn Hawkins
CEO, National Center on Sexual Exploitation
1201 F Street NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20004
(202)393-7245 | dawn@ncose.com | endsexualexploitation.org



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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. 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.

Subject: Re: Kanakuk Kamps on the 2022 Dirty Dozen List
Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 3:40:17 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Dawn Hawkins
To: Child Protection Plan, Lina Nealon, Joe White, Joe White Letter, rick@kanakuk.com
CC: Patrick Trueman, Child Protection Plan, Eileen Walsh
Attachments: image001.jpg, image002.jpg

Dear Rick and Kanakuk Leadership:

We acknowledge your email correspondence on March 8, 2022. We also acknowledge that we have seen reports that many children have had positive experiences at Kanakuk. However, as you know, we are an organization dedicated to changing systems that foster sexual exploitation, and work to expose these harms wherever they occur and press for substantive change at every level.

We made the decision to name Kanakuk Kamps to the Dirty Dozen List after hearing directly from survivors and listening to their stories in the media about the sexual abuse they experienced at Kanakuk and watching for a year as Kanakuk seemingly gaslighted and minimized the experiences of these survivors in the press and on its website. We reached out to Kanakuk **twice at the email Kanakuk provided for reporting abuse behavior and heard no response for three months after our initial email** (we hope no survivor emails or reports of abuse have also languished in spam for months). However, your lack of response to NCOSE is not what has landed Kanakuk on this list of facilitators of sexual abuse and exploitation. Rather, it is your refusal to assume responsibility for your role in the abuse of these many individuals in your response to the survivors and your public comments in the media, letters to your donors, and content on your website. We now know of at least 110 survivors who have come forward alleging abuse by 25 former Kanakuk staff. The same day we released our Dirty Dozen List, NCOSE heard directly from another family whose son was abused at Kanakuk.

The claims in your email about immediately terminating the individual you admit abused children at Kanakuk are misleading. Your leadership has previously admitted it was aware that this employee was engaged in extremely inappropriate behavior for years before they terminated him, including his playing nude basketball, riding 4-Wheelers while nude with young boys, and sleeping in the same bed with boys. It is disturbing to us that continue to shirk the responsibility your organization played in allowing the abuse by Pete Newman, the employee in question, and the many of their examples of inappropriate behavior shared with your leadership.

We would welcome the chance to view your child protection plan, not just a few highlights on the website. If the webpage you have shared is in fact the full child protection plan, it falls far short in a number of specific ways and we would suggest changes to strengthen it.

Our hope with naming Kanakuk to this list is to spur change at Kanakuk, elevate the voices of survivors who have felt silenced out of shame or fear, and to raise awareness that institutions like Kanakuk are responsible for creating safer spaces.

We request that you make these following changes:

1. Issue an annual transparency report regarding allegations of sexual abuse, including child-on-child harmful sexual behavior, with descriptions of how Kanakuk responded.
2. 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. Publicly 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.

Thank you for accepting our invitation to meet. Please contact my assistant at ewalsh@ncose.org to set up a convenient time. If some of the survivors of Kanakuk are willing and able to join us, we would like to include them in the meeting as well.

Respectfully,



Dawn Hawkins
CEO, National Center on Sexual Exploitation
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(202)393-7245 | dawn@ncose.com | endsexualexploitation.org

P.S. [Recent victories and progress here—you'll be encouraged!](#)

From: Child Protection Plan <CPP@kanakuk.com>

Date: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 5:18 PM

To: Lina Nealon <lnealon@ncose.com>

Cc: Dawn Hawkins <dawn@ncose.com>, Patrick Trueman <patrick@ncose.com>, Child Protection Plan <CPP@kanakuk.com>

Subject: Kanakuk Kamps on the 2022 Dirty Dozen List

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Lina and Dawn,

Thank you for your email. We apologize for the delayed response; we have determined that our network spam filters captured your initial communications. Our IT department is taking the necessary steps to prevent this from occurring in the future.

Kanakuk appreciates your support of victims and survivors of sexual abuse and shares your belief that the world should be free of sexual abuse and exploitation. However, with much regret, we saw you chose to include Kanakuk in your list of “Dirty Dozen” released 3.8.22. Without the benefit of any direct conversation with Kanakuk, you appear to have made your decision based on several articles and an anonymous website that have grievously distorted the facts and misrepresented the truth. Additionally, in your email dated 12.14.21 that we retrieved from the spam filter; you reference your “concerns about the way Kanakuk Kamps is handling ongoing reports of child abuse.” We are not aware of any ongoing abuse, nor are we aware of any abuse claims beyond 2011 when a staff member acted inappropriately with campers. These campers followed the Kanakuk Child Protection Plan (CPP) training they received at the beginning of their camp term and immediately reported the suspicious activity of the staff in question. This individual was immediately terminated, reported to authorities, and ultimately convicted of abusing campers.

Regarding your inquiry about child protection at Kanakuk, information on the Kanakuk Child Plan (CPP) can be found [here](#). This plan is much more comprehensive than the standard application, background checks and interviews relied upon by many youth-serving organizations and has been shared with over 600 youth-serving organizations across the nation. We would welcome an opportunity for direct discussion with you about the Kanakuk Child Protection plan and would be happy to connect you with our Director of Safety, Rick Braschler. Rick can be reached at 417-266-3337, or you can email him at rick@kanakuk.com.

From: Lina Nealon <lnealon@ncose.com>

Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 7:50 PM

To: Joe White <Joe@kanakuk.com>; Joe White Letter <jwhite@kanakuk.com>

Cc: Dawn Hawkins <dawn@ncose.com>; Patrick Trueman <patrick@ncose.com>; Child Protection Plan <CPP@kanakuk.com>

Subject: Kanakuk Kamps on the 2022 Dirty Dozen List

Dear Mr. White,

I’m contacting you on behalf of the National Center on Sexual Exploitation’s President, Pat Trueman, and CEO, Dawn Hawkins. Attached you will find a letter regarding Kanakuk Kamps being named to the annual 2022 **Dirty Dozen List** as a major facilitator of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Please have your staff contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,

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.

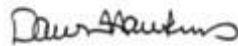
As one of the largest and most well-known Christian camps in America, Kanakuk Kamps has a moral obligation to confront the extensive harms that have been committed *for decades* against innocent children under your care...grave harms that could have been prevented had Kanakuk leadership cared more about 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.

Respectfully,



Patrick Trueman, Esq.
President



Dawn Hawkins
CEO