

June 27, 2024

Mr. Tommy Hoffman  
Executive Director, Herzl Camp  
4330 Cedar Lae Road  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Cc: Herzl Camp Association Board of Directors  
Jason Grais, President  
Ilyse Goldsmith, President-Elect  
Libby Finn, Vice President  
Audra Mintz, Vice President  
Jason Divine, Vice President  
Andrew Lifson, Treasurer  
Josh Stein, Secretary

Dear Mr. Hoffman,

We are a diverse group of current, former and prospective Herzl families that ourselves have grown up at Jewish camps and credit those experiences for shaping our own proud Jewish identity and being part of a greater community.

It is in this spirit that we write to you to share our deepening concern regarding a situation that occurred during the recent "Taste of Herzl" session. Specifically, we are responding to the distress expressed by young female campers after being in a bunk with a camper who is biologically male.

Indeed, we share in Herzl's mission to be an inclusive and welcoming environment to all, and no child should ever be excluded because of his or her own orientation or identity. This admirable cause, however, is not absolute, and Herzl Camp must answer for this lack of transparency and regrettable choice not to inform nor engage with the parents of other campers.

We have heard from our children and friends that during this past week, young females in the bunk were exposed to this camper's penis while he was changing, and they were forced to undress and change in front of him without parental consent. These elementary school children have hardly learned about the sanctity of their own bodies!

Our concern, moreover, is also for the transitioning camper, who we're told became somewhat of a spectacle when the girls, in their words, "gathered around him and looked at his penis." This situation has understandably caused significant anxiety and upset among the children involved, and we are appalled that such a scenario was allowed to occur.

For generations, families have entrusted Herzl Camp with the safety, well-being, and comfort of our children. This, however, is a step too far, and we argue it sets a dangerous precedent that threatens the physical and emotional wellbeing of our children. Additionally, this experience severely undermines our confidence Herzl's priorities and agenda, which should be always and forever be rooted in Torah, Gd, and Israel.

We expect Herzl Camp to immediately reinstate its traditional policy of maintaining separate accommodations, restrooms, and showers for boys and girls, and we demand that any proposed changes to these policies be communicated clearly and involve consultation with all stakeholders.

Herzl Camp has long been a key pillar of our Jewish community, but how it moves forward in this regard will determine whether we will enroll our children at Herzl or look elsewhere.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

*L'Shalom,*

