Defining Observable Behaviors

**Intended Learning Outcomes:**

- Provide staff with a clear way of describing problem behaviors from campers.
- Establish behaviors as observable and measurable.

**Category:** Youth Development

**Method:** Group Game

**Duration:** 15 Minutes

**Plan:**

1. Start by asking staff to provide their definitions of a behavior.
2. Provide the definition of behavior from Cooper Textbook: “That portion of an organism’s interaction with its environment that is characterized by detectable displacement in space through time of some part of the organism and that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of the environment”. In other word’s: A living thing’s observable and measurable interaction with its environment. Behaviors must be measurable and observable.
3. Ask: Why Observable? We must be able to see it to be able to do something about it. It can’t be an opinion.
4. Ask: Why measurable? We must be able to quantify it by counting or timing it so that we can do something about it.
5. In groups of 4-8 people, provide each group with cut-up “Observable Measurable Behaviors” (see resource folder page 1). Ask groups to separate them into two piles: Observable Measurable Behaviors and Not Observable Measurable Behaviors.
6. Ask groups to feedback their piles and go over the answers. Highlight the reasons why each behavior appeared in which pile.
7. Provide the three tips for defining behavior:
   8. 1. Ask yourself, “What does the behavior look like?”
   9. 2. Provide examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
   10. 3. Define WHERE and WHEN the behavior occurs. (routines and triggering antecedents)
8. Ask why it is important that we can clearly define behaviors? (Our ability to define it more clearly allows us to communicate it better to someone else and to therefore create the most effective behavior modification plan.

**Required Resources:**

- Observable Measurable Behaviors cut up.