

# Summer Camp Cabin Leader Training Manual



17301 Silver Spur Drive | Tuolumne, CA 95379  
209-928-4248 | [www.silverspur.com](http://www.silverspur.com)

Cabin Leader Training Manual  
Revised 06/2011

## **SILVER SPUR RETREAT CENTER STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**We believe in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God, inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme, and final authority in faith, life, and practice.**

**We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man.**

**We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. All human beings are born with a sinful nature.**

**We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and all who truly repent of their sins and believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood.**

**We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension to heaven, and in His present life there for us as high priest and advocate.**

**We believe that all who receive, by faith, the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.**

**We believe in the blessed hope, the personal and imminent, bodily return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.  
We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and unjust, the just to everlasting life and blessedness, and the unjust to everlasting punishment of conscious torment.  
We believe in the great commission which our Lord has given to His church to evangelize the world and that this evangelization is the great mission of the church.**

## APPENDIX A FIRST AID PROCEDURES

### The Ill or Injured Camper:

- Take the ill or injured camper to the nurse.
- Don't give any medication.
- Remain calm if camper is injured. Stay with injured camper and send somebody else to call for camp nurse.
- Do not play "Doctor." Let the nurse diagnose the problem.
- Never move a camper if you suspect a broken bone, back, or neck injury.
- Do not call the ambulance until the nurse has first been contacted. IF the nurse is unavailable, let the program staff (Dean, Program Coordinator, camp staff) call for an ambulance.
- Protect the scene of the accident. Make sure nobody else is in danger.
- If you are alone with a camper when injury occurs, yell for help.
- Never ignore an injury or a complaint of pain.

## APPENDIX B EMERGENCY FIRE PROCEDURES

### Fire Drills:

In case of fire, remember that you need to make sure that all of your kids are accounted for. You are to bring campers outside the dining room area to the amphitheatre. At that time, you will be given instructions on what to do next by the staff. If a camper is missing, notify the dean or program staff immediately.

If you hear the fire alarm, do not hesitate to leave immediately to the location described above. Do not run, but walk quickly to the appropriate location.

## Welcome to Summer Camp!

Thank you for joining with Silver Spur for Summer Camp! Whether this is your first time as a Cabin Leader or one of many, we know that God will bless your commitment by working in your campers lives and yours!

In preparation for this ministry, we encourage you to take some time out every day to pray in advance for your campers. Wouldn't it be a privilege to honestly be able to tell each of your campers that you have been praying for him or her?

As you also pray for your own role as leader, remember to ask for strength and wisdom to meet their needs. Along with the joys, cabin leading can be exhausting, spiritually challenging and even frustrating at times. Beginning now to seek God's help in preparing to minister effectively is the best way to get ready. Pay attention to questions like: Can I lead by example? Am I ready to pray with my campers? Why am I serving? Do I know how to clearly express the gospel? If you think you may be unprepared for these things, ask for help from your church leadership or from a trusted Christian friend.

Seek the closeness of Christ now, before camp begins. Starting to spend extra intentional time with Christ now will present you ready to live out a fresh, renewed walk of faith as you share the weekend here with your kids.

***Please take time to read through this Cabin Leader Handbook!*** Also, plan to bring this booklet with you to camp as a reference guide. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call us: 209-928-4248

Thank you again for partnering with us, and we pray that the Lord will do an amazing work and receive all the glory for Summer Camp!

Sincerely in Christ,

The Program Team  
Silver Spur

## CAMP PHILOSOPHY

## NOTES

***My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ...*** Colossians 2:2 NIV

Our mission as an extension of Next Generation Churches of Northern California and Nevada is to offer a camping experience that encourages young people to know Christ in a deeper way, whether this is a first-time decision or they have been walking with Him for years. This encouragement requires a camping program that involves various elements which were designed for that purpose. The following elements are integral aspects of our youth camps:

- Quality, Bible-based teaching that is relevant to young people
- Christ-centered worship utilizing contemporary Christian music
- Small group discussions or cabin times designed to further show how the truth learned in the speaking sessions and seminars can be applicable and practical
- Age-appropriate recreational programs that enable young people to have a lot of fun and develop friendships with others
- Quality accommodations and meals
- Various activities (group and individual) designed to enrich the camping experience for young people (i.e. videos, art and craft projects, games, mixers, skill development, etc.)
- Time set aside for each camper individually to spend time with their cabin leader to discuss their personal relationship with Christ
- Quality Christian cabin leaders from various churches who have the ability to connect with the students before and after camp
- Leadership (deans and Program Team) that is committed to Jesus Christ and to each camper's best

Note: This document is intended to be a summary. It is not exhaustive.

## **KP Crew**

1. Cabin Leaders are to assist their cabin with KP assignments.
2. Take the plates from the table, throw the trash in the garbage, and stack the plates where the dining room hostess indicates.
3. Take the cups/glasses to the bus area, dump the liquids in the buckets provided, and put them in the trays up-side-down.
4. The silverware should be put into the appropriate tubs.
5. Wipe clean each table and chair.
6. Sweep the floor.

## **CLOSING CAMP**

The following steps will help make a smooth departure from camp.

1. Begin packing bags and cleaning cabins before breakfast on the last day of camp.
2. Take luggage to the designated area before breakfast.
3. Final cabin clean-up is a whole group project. There will be an inspection by the Deans to ensure that everything is litter free and well swept. Please try to leave Silver Spur in better condition than when you arrived.
4. Once your cabin is cleaned, please take time to pick up litter outside your cabin and around Silver Spur grounds. This helps keep camp looking clean and beautiful.
5. All lost and found items should be turned in to the Program Coordinator or the camp office.
6. Campers and staff may fill out a lost and found form for any items they have lost that have not been located by departure time. If the camp staff recovers the item we will mail it and bill you for the cost of shipping.

NOTE: No provision will be made for campers/Cabin Leaders to remain in camp after 12:00 p.m. on Sunday . Please make transportation arrangements in plenty of time to avoid unnecessary delay. Thanks!

## **STAFF CONDUCT**

Any person accepting the role of Cabin Leader is committing to a position of great responsibility. You will be expected to conduct yourself in a way that is a credit to your church. All of your actions need to comply with common sense, health and safety standards and rules for campers and staff. If you are in doubt about something, ***please ask***.

### **Guidelines**

1. Due to the number of campers and camp policy, any calls - incoming or outgoing - should be for emergencies only. Business or confidential calls can be arranged with the Camp Office. We would love for the kids to “unplug” from all cell phones and electronics for the weekend, and you are a great help in setting that tone!
2. We ask that you refrain from leaving the grounds for any reason without notifying the Program Coordinator – programmed activities excluded.
3. Each Cabin Leader is responsible for their own bedding, clothing, luggage, and personal belongings unless prior arrangements have been made.
4. Kindly respect the camp property and grounds.
5. Please do not bring pets to camp. They are not allowed on the grounds.
6. Any illness, injury, or infection should be reported to the camp nurse at once.
7. It is a state requirement that shirt and shoes be worn in the Dining Hall.
8. Make it a point to throw your trash in the receptacles provided. It will greatly aid those who keep the grounds clean, and it will also set a great example for the campers.
9. When leaving a room, please turn off the lights or heater if they are no longer needed.

## DRESS CODE

**Because of the broad range of opinions on what is modest or acceptable, we take a conservative stance on dress code. Remember that you are here for the campers and you do not want to bring any extra attention to yourself because of what you are wearing. You also need to remember that you are setting the example for impressionable campers and that should be reflected through not only your conduct but the way you dress as well. The following is Silver Spur's expectation for appropriate attire while at camp:**

1. Appropriate footwear is required at all times. Plan for closed-toed shoes in addition to wearing appropriate shoes or boots for the activity that you are engaged in. If you are on KP duty, you are required by law to wear shoes during the times you are working in the kitchen.
2. The following attire is discouraged:
  - Immodestly ripped or torn clothing.
  - Clothing that exposes the midriff, underwear or has a plunging neckline. It's Winter Camp... cover up!
  - Offensive words, language, or pictures on shirts or hats as deemed inappropriate by Silver Spur supervisory staff. Take a second look; there are many tee or sweat shirts today that in the name of humor or sarcasm really send the wrong type of message. (If in doubt, leave it home. If you have questions about attire you or your campers have brought with you, check with the Silver Spur supervisory staff before wearing).
  - 2-piece swimsuits that do not cover the midriff. (Polar Bear Plunge, here we come!)

The bottom line? Our clothing standard should not make others question our commitment to Christ!

## DINING HALL RESPONSIBILITIES

### Before the Meal

#### KP Crew

1. KP Crews will be assigned in advance.
2. Please arrive at the dining area 15 - 20 minutes before mealtime.
3. Cabin Leaders are to assist their cabin with KP assignments.
4. Set tables according to instructions given by the dining room host or hostess.
5. Put drinks on tables.

### During the Meal

#### All Campers

1. Only one person should be up from the table at a time.
2. Loud noise and foot traffic should be kept to a minimum. (This includes pounding on the tables or performing loud chants.)
3. The dining room hostess, Camp Deans and the Program Staff should be the only ones using the PA system.

#### All Cabin Leaders

1. You are expected to be at each meal unless prior arrangements are made. The kitchen prepares meals based on the total number of campers and staff unless notified otherwise.
2. Remain at your table throughout the meal.
3. Encourage good manners.
4. Always give the dining room hostess your attention.
5. If your cabin is part of the KP crew, please stay with them during set-up and clean-up.

### After the Meal

#### All Campers

1. Stack the plates at the end of the table, with all left-over food and trash on the top plate.
2. Put cups/glasses at the end of the table. Do not stack the cups or glasses.
3. Separate the silverware (knives, forks, spoons) and put in 3 piles at the end of the table.

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## SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

Silver Spur policy prohibits all forms of discrimination. It is the policy of Silver Spur to ensure that its employees, volunteers and guests are not subject to harassment during the course of Silver Spur sponsored activities.

Some forms of unlawful harassment include: discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, mental or physical disability, or any other form of unlawful discrimination.

Forms of sexual harassment include but are not limited to: Inappropriate, unwelcome, or offensive conduct whether verbal, visual, physical, including making comments about another person's body or dress, displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons or posters, making sexually explicit jokes, writing provocative or sexually explicit notes or invitations, touching, assaulting or impeding/blocking movements. It is unlawful for males to sexually harass females and other males and for females to sexually harass males and other females. Sexual harassment is unlawful whether it involved co-workers, harassment by a supervisor, or persons doing business with Silver Spur. The camp office has a full copy of the sexual harassment policy, if you have any questions.

It is your responsibility to report all incidents of sexual or other unlawful harassment to the Program Coordinator or Silver Spur's Office Department. Once a report has been made, Human Resources will make a full investigation into the allegations. Please understand that Silver Spur and California law prohibits retaliation against anyone for reporting sexual or other unlawful harassment and will do everything possible to protect the anonymity of the person reporting the conduct.

## SILVER SPUR TRADITIONS

- **Respect** for God and His Word
- **Respect** for authority
- **Respect** for each other
- **Respect** for the facilities, grounds, and equipment
  
- Please keep all electronic entertainment, slingshots, matches, and fireworks at home.
- Cabin windows are only to be used as a fire escape in an emergency—if anyone goes out of one any other time, they may be obligated to pay to have it repaired or replaced (minimum of \$25).
- In an effort to respect our neighbors, loud noise outside must be kept to a minimum after 10pm.
- After lights out, please stay in your cabin unless you have to use the restroom or you've made arrangements with the Program Coordinator. This is important to keep campers safe.
- Contraband of any kind is prohibited, including drugs, alcohol, chew, cigarettes, knives, etc.
- Males are not allowed in, on, behind, or around the females' rooms/cabins and vice versa.
- Please stay in your own rooms unless you are invited into the cabin by a cabin leader of the same gender.
- Please stay out of the kitchen at all times.
- Public displays of affection are discouraged. To model genuine love between one another, simple public displays of affection are permitted for married couples only.
- Please speak in a positive manner. No swearing or derogatory comments should be made.
- Since we respect each other, we do not practice raids or pranks of any kind at Silver Spur. Disciplinary action may be taken if a serious prank occurs.

**Have lots of fun, but please keep the traditions going strong!**

## CABIN LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

“Be All That You Can Be ‘In Christ’”

The Cabin Leader is a person who should be mature spiritually and emotionally. Even though the experience may very well bless you richly, the Cabin Leader is the one who is to invest in others, not the one coming to camp to be ministered to. There is a difference between what a Cabin Leader should “do” and what a Cabin Leader should “be.” Before noting the “do’s” of leading, reflect upon what a Cabin Leader should “be” in Christian character. Below are traits that will enhance your ministry to kids. A Cabin Leader should be:

- Spiritual leader
- Encourager
- Yourself – Be Real!
- Listener
- Proactive
- Vulnerable
- Friendly
- Understanding
- Observant

## CHAIN OF COMMAND/DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The lines of authority are crucial to having an effective camping ministry. It is important that you follow this guideline so we can have a unified camp. The further the problem travels up the line of authority, the more severe the problem should be. If you have any questions about disciplinary action, please refer to this on how you should handle the problem.

- The Camper
- The Cabin Leader
- The Dean (if one is present)
- Program Coordinator
- The Director
- Parent is notified and camper sent home

## SUSPECTED CASE OF CHILD ABUSE

As youth workers, we are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse to the proper authorities. Child abuse is defined as physical abuse, being left alone or without adequate supervision, malnourishment, serious emotional disturbance, lack of essential medical care, inadequate housing, lack of clothing, not being sent to school, not having a parent or guardian, emotional mistreatment, sexual molestation and/or exploitation.

We must be aware that the majority of our information will come directly from the child him/herself. In suspected cases of physical abuse, we may see evidence. In other cases of suspected abuse, we may only have the child’s or a friend’s story.

Therefore, if a suspected case of child abuse comes to your attention, notify the Program Coordinator immediately. Please **DO NOT** share this information with anyone else.

## HELPFUL VERSES: ENTRY POINTS

-Assurance of salvation	John 5:24
-Guilt/Forgiveness	I John 1:9
-Lack of meaning	Eccl. 12:8, 13
-Fear of death	John 11:25-27
-Desire for maximum living	John 10:10
-No basis for values	Eph. 4:17-5:21
-Separation from God	Rom. 3:22b-24
-Frustration with sin	I John 2:1
-What hell is like	Luke 16:19-31
-Good works	Eph. 2:8-10
-The old life and the new	Eph. 4:17-24
-You are a new creation	2 Cor. 5:17

## UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLINE

Contrary to popular opinion, discipline is a positive function. The act of disciplining implies that there is a standard of conduct that is expected. When that standard is not met, then discipline serves to steer the person towards obedience. In the camping ministry, one person's behavior can influence every camper. Discipline is needed in the best interest of the entire camp. Don't be afraid to confront and discipline your campers when they violate camp rules. *If the campers are not part of your cabin group, please go to their Cabin Leader and let him/her know the situation, allowing them to handle it.* The spirit of the discipline, however, should have within it the hope of restoration, not retaliation. Remember, discipline is positive: punishment is negative. We need to show the campers that God is not a God of confusion, but order. Discipline is a Godly characteristic. When disciplining, remember the following:

Discipline is positive – punishment is negative.

Don't threaten – be realistic with discipline.

Stay in control – If you start to “lose-it,” take a step back.

Discipline the behavior, not the person/personality.

Know the difference between a mistake and a conscious defiant act.

Expect the best from campers--a negative expectation breeds negativity.

Hands off - In today's world we need to be extra careful to avoid any type of physical contact with campers that could be viewed as “inappropriate”. This does not mean that we don't want you to put your arm around a camper in love. We're simply asking that you be very aware of how your actions could be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

## **ADDITIONAL CABIN LEADER INFORMATION**

### General Sessions:

Cabin Leaders are key in keeping control during Session times (“The Main Event”). Do your best to engage the campers in what is happening. Cabin Leaders should sit with their kids at all sessions (guys with guys, girls with girls).

### Cabins:

You are responsible for the campers in your cabin. The cleanliness of the cabin is also under your supervision. If a camper leaves the cabin at night without your permission, you should notify a Dean. Deans will typically be found in the Lodge.

The “lights out” policy is in place for the best interest of the entire camp. Please cooperate with the program staff by making sure kids are quiet and the lights are out when designated.

### Personal Property:

Make sure that the campers understand that any damage to camp or individual property (vandalism or theft) will require the offender to make financial restitution for the property. Campers who maliciously damage another person’s property will be held responsible for their actions.

If a camper has an ipod, radio, CD player, or cell phone, collect them and label them with the camper’s name. They may be kept in the office and will be returned at the end of camp.

### Attendance:

You and your campers are expected to be at every scheduled event on time (unless cleared with the deans). Your job as a Cabin Leader is to make sure all your kids are accounted for at all events. If a camper is missing, please notify the Dean immediately.

### Doctrinal Differences:

Please do not teach or promote any doctrinal issues that historically brought disunity or division to the church. We are not asking you to change your beliefs about such doctrinal teachings or positions but to bring harmony and unity to all assembled. The major purpose of camp is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ and His salvation of grace to the unsaved. Another purpose is to teach believers the basic categories of discipleship. Allow the speakers and program staff to determine the key Bible texts to be studied by the campers. Don’t encourage students to be forced to take positions on passages/doctrines that enter into the “gray area” of interpretation. Let these issues be dealt with at the local church level. One position is not necessarily “right” or “wrong.” Our goal at Silver Spur, however, is to emphasize the major doctrinal categories instead of the minor ones.

## **SHARING THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION**

John 10:10	God has a very special plan for you!
Romans 3:23	All have sinned.
Romans 6:23	The penalty is death (Separation from God).
Romans 5:8	Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who saved us by dying in our place. He paid the penalty for our sins. He conquered sin when God raised Him from the dead.
John 1:12	One must receive Him and repent from their sins (turn away from sin and walk back towards God).
Mark 8:34-36	Jesus becomes our Savior and Lord when we honestly desire to follow Him.
John 3:16	God did all this because He loves you and desires a relationship with you.

\*Do you desire to follow Jesus? Do you want to have a relationship with Him?

-Prayer:

- Ask for forgiveness of sins.
- Receive Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Ask Holy Spirit to guide through life.
- Pledge to follow God and His will daily.

Remember:

It is not a prayer that saves them; God must do the work through His Holy Spirit in their heart. It is not a matter of us convincing a camper that they must pray a particular prayer or talk them into getting saved. Our responsibility is to share with them the truth of God’s Word and be available to assist them in their response to God’s call.

A few tips on one-on-one counseling:

- Pray! Depend on the Holy Spirit.
- Individual session / problem with camper – keep it private.
- Never be shocked. Appearances are seldom as they seem.
- Keep their confidence (see exceptions below). \*
- Listen – force yourself to concentrate on them.
- Emphasize God’s ability to solve problems, not yours.
- Help them to make their own decisions / own conclusions.
- Ask open-ended questions and let them answer.
- Men counsel boys; women counsel girls.
- Quietness doesn’t mean they aren’t listening or don’t appreciate your concern.

\*EXCEPTIONS TO CONFIDENCE RULE: These must be reported the Program Coordinator as quickly as possible so we can get the camper the help that is needed.

- Abuse: Sexual or Physical
- Suicide talk/attempts (past or present)
- Harm to others.

### Recreation:

You are key to our effectiveness in recreation. The recreation staff are working hard to appeal to all campers in activities.

Not all kids are athletic and not all have self-confidence in their athletic abilities. The recreation is designed to cover a variety of different types of events. Please be supportive, energetic, and open-minded about the recreational games (even if you don’t like them). You are setting the standard to your campers. Your attitude will be contagious, good or bad.

Remember, winning isn’t everything. In fact, winning will be downplayed and cooperation will be enhanced as the major quality we seek in recreational activities. Model a spirit of team unity and togetherness as we participate in recreation. Be ready to try new concepts and new games for recreation.

### The Homesick

- It is a genuine illness.
- It grows out of insecurity and fear.
- Assure camper that it happens to other people as well.
- Make it seem difficult for the camper to be released from camp.
- Avoid a phone call home if possible.
- Enlist the help of a “motherly” staff person and try to solve the problem before nightfall.
- Offer love, affection, and understanding.
- Pray for them asking God to help them through it.
- Redirect their attention to camp activities.
- If a camper can’t handle it, that’s okay, too. You did not fail.

### Camper “Couples”:

Camper couples are inevitable. Our guidelines are in place to free you from being “the bad guy.” We believe that the kids need to focus on the Lord, and not on the opposite sex. In order for us to be unified in the conduct expected of our campers, make sure we handle the “camper couples” accordingly.

- Discuss relationships with them in a mature manner.
- “Don’t look down on them because they are young—” be respectful.
- Any physical contact is basically a no-no.
- Try not to encourage crushes or “pairing up.”

## **CABIN DYNAMICS**

Cabin time is time set aside for you to build relationships with your campers. It is also a great opportunity for question & answer time and for spiritual growth. The small group setting will give your campers a safe, fun place to express what they are thinking and feeling.

### **1. Know your limits**

Let your campers know a rough timeline for your cabin times. Also let them know what these times are for and what to bring to them. (Note books, pen, camp booklet, and Bible). Give them some structure allowing also for freedom. If someone wants to talk after you are done, be open to it. That's why you are there!

### **2. Stay focused**

Stick to what you start, (speaker message, etc.) try not to jump around and confuse them. Be careful of expounding on every subject to extremes. They don't need to know everything you know in one discussion. Also be careful not to dominate the conversation.

### **3. Be Committed**

Your best discussions may not happen the first night—campers need time to get comfortable. Nevertheless, give 100% each time, you might be surprised.

### **4. Be real!**

Kids can tell if you're faking it or are not really in to what you're doing. So just BE YOURSELF, relaxed and willing to be crazy as well as serious. They will open up to you when they want to, and also they are just kids and love to hang out with adults who just want to hang with them.

### **5. Sleep!!**

Remember, as much energy as they have, kids will get tired and cranky. So lights out is still in effect for both you and your campers' well-being. If your cabin time runs over, it's fine, just try and keep them from staying up into the twilight hours.

### **6. Group Dynamics**

Sit where everyone can see you, and you can see them. This encourages open conversation and helps prevent campers from being excluded.

## **KEYS TO EFFECTIVE LEADING**

In order to be the best possible Cabin Leader that you can be, we encourage the following:

- A personal devotional time daily.
- Praying for your campers.
- Moral uprightness.
- Modest dress.
- Speaking positively in support of the whole camp ministry and program at all times (even if you disagree).
- Working through problem situations by confronting the appropriate parties in love.
- Handling all discipline in cabin.
- Being an active team member for all recreation activities. Curb your competitiveness and be a cheerleader!
- Sitting with your campers during sessions and meals.
- Spending time with your campers during free time.
- Working on an "encouragement campaign" for each camper – noticing their unique qualities and character.
- Showing appropriate behavior towards other cabin leaders with no flirting, hand-holding, kissing, etc., among unmarried couples.
- Shoulder hugs only with campers.
- Refraining from having outside visitors.
- Majoring in the major doctrinal issues, not "majoring in the minors."
- Supporting all decisions made by the program staff (even if you don't agree).

## **ONE-ON-ONE TIPS**

Much of your free time will be spent one-on-one with your campers. The one in charge is to be Jesus Christ. You don't need to know everything. It is not bad to say, "I don't know." Never advise where you are unsure but contact the Dean or Program Coordinator if you have any questions. In all cases, go to God's Word as our main source of information and advice. In the "gray areas" of Scripture, be honest and give advice as your opinion only.

## SENIOR HIGH CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS (GRADES 9-12)

### *Physically*

- Characteristics: Nearly full-grown, becoming strong and skillful, developing consistency, coordinated.
- Needs: Able to show development of skills, recognition for new abilities, acceptance of limitations.
- Learning Activities: Competition that shows need for further growth, activities that challenge abilities and reinforce strengths, activities that don't intimidate those who are still growing.

### *Mentally*

- Characteristics: Analytical, logical, needs reasons, likes debate, imaginative, can be reasonable and idealistic, likes facts, real concerns about future.
- Needs: To express opinions, to try ideas, encouragement to go without fear of failure, adults to see him/her as an equal.
- Learning Activities: Debates, informal discussion gatherings, campfires with encouraged sharing, cabin devotions.

### *Socially*

- Characteristics: More independent, identified with an ideology (i.e. Christian), not ashamed to be with parents so long as respected, volunteers for responsibility.
- Needs: Acceptance as mature, free to express thoughts, respect, guidance to set appropriate priorities.
- Learning Activities: Cabin Leaders who teach leadership, experiences that teach responsibility, activities that show his/her role in a group, free time that allows for interaction.

### *Emotionally*

- Characteristics: Excited about coordination and appearance, worried about success, unstable and unpredictable, wants excitement and challenges, gives all or nothing in projects.
- Needs: Respect, recognition, rewards.
- Learning Activities: Activities that provide success and recognition, crazy activities where he/she can be an individual.

### *Spiritually*

- Characteristics: Either sold out for Christ (in the heart) or disillusioned due to inconsistency around him/her by leaders, wants to defend beliefs or not believe at all.
- Needs: Chance to determine if faith is personal or parents', opportunity to test beliefs in debate, is okay to have questions, and that Christ provides real answers.
- Learning Activities: One-on-one talks with cabin leader, campfires with sharing, speakers that are real, cabin discussions, chances to make meaningful decisions for Christ, consistent role models.

## **7. Model, Respect, and Encourage**

Get to know them! And no put downs. Let your campers know they need to respect each other and their property. Let them know there are no stupid questions and to feel free to ask you. Also be sensitive to shy campers.

## **8. Keep your discussion guide handy**

Take notes at the meetings so you can go over and answer questions your campers might have. Try to write down open ended questions that have no wrong or right answers. If your campers see you interacting and taking an interest, they will too.

## **9. Pray**

Pray for your campers and be open to pray with them as a group and individually. Also, take time to look for ministry opportunities throughout the weekend; not all of your campers may fully understand what it means to be a believer in Christ.

## **DISCUSSION STARTERS**

There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Allow everyone to make their own choices without judgment. Share ideas to help your campers discover their own values and ideas.

1. Start a sentence and in turn each person completes it:
  - a. This world would be better if...
  - b. I feel like crying when...
  - c. I never have time for...
  - d. There would be peace if...
  - e. I get angry when...
  - f. Ten years from now I hope...
  - g. Giving love means...
2. Share problems - Have campers state an opinion, then discuss:
  - a. What would they like to see happen?
  - b. What can they do about it?
  - c. Avoid "blaming" someone. Rather, try answering the question, "How can we solve the problem?"
3. General questions:
  - a. What did you learn during the meeting, etc. that is important to you?
  - b. Were you in agreement or disagreement with anything that happened?

## JUNIOR CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS (GRADES 3-6)

### *Physically*

- Characteristics: Lots of energy, short attention span, loves out-of-doors activity, likes challenges, daring.
- Needs: Creative activities, structured free time, activities to stretch capabilities.
- Examples of activities that meet needs: Relays, races, activities that structure free time (archery, carpetball, etc.)

### *Mentally*

- Characteristics: Inquisitive, investigator, collector, good memory, limited reasoning power based on facts.
- Needs: Information to fill memory banks, hands on learning opportunities (touch, taste, see, hear).
- Learning Activities: Needs to be challenged to memorize, scavenger hunts, nature walks, night walks.

### *Socially*

- Characteristics: Likes groups, acts independent of reactions of others, hero worshiper.
- Needs: Needs to learn how to cooperate, needs to see how his/her actions affect others, needs to learn values.
- Learning Activities: Cabin activities provide “club” feeling, cooperative initiatives can be used to start him/her thinking of the needs of others, one-on-one cabin leader talks challenge him/her through hero-worshiper needs.

### *Emotionally*

- Characteristics: Has few fears, embarrassed by outward affection with peers, jealous.
- Needs: Freedom to express appreciation his/her own way, understanding from adults who are annoyed by his/her impulsiveness.
- Learning Activities: Activities that challenge his/her sense of daring help develop confidence to stand up to fears. Verse integrating helps balance improper emotions.

### *Spiritually*

- Characteristics: Understands Scripture, has great faith, applies little emotion to beliefs, worships leaders more than God (because he/she can see them).
- Needs: Leaders who can be examples of Christ
- Learning Activities: Skit nights where cabin leaders display their “humanness,” verse memorization, verse integration, verse illustrations through activities.

## JUNIOR HIGH CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS (GRADES 6-8)

### *Physically*

- Characteristics: Growing rapidly, puberty, periods of energy and fatigue, blemishes, enormous appetite.
- Needs: To be accepted, to be understood in all moods, activities that challenge creativity.
- Learning Activities: Well-planned meals and lots of food, optional activities that provide choices, creative ways to use free time.

### *Mentally*

- Characteristics: Shows first sign of analytical thinking, pushes for perfection and rarely achieves it in self or others, wants to spar mentally with adults, easily frustrated.
- Needs: To express thoughts, understanding from adult world, consistency and stability to counter his/her vacillations.
- Learning Activities: Cabin wrap-ups where he/she can talk, one-on-one conversations with a cabin leader who will listen and not react, nature walks to show that God is bigger than his/her problems.

### *Socially*

- Characteristics: Lacks respect toward others because they don't measure up, tries to be adult and be independent, wants to be with “in” group, develops loyalties (good and bad), is often afraid to be seen with parents (might treat him/her as a child in front of peers).
- Needs: Consistency, stability, agape love.
- Learning Activities: Free time (activities that provide freedom from awkwardness, avoid public failure, and are “in” and not childish).

### *Emotionally*

- Characteristics: Feels misunderstood, is sensitive, has mood swings, intense, rebellious, critical.
- Needs: Positive experiences, examples to follow, the understanding of adult acquaintances, respect as a person.
- Learning Activities: Activities in which he/she can step out of comfort zone and be accepted, activities where he/she can be a star (reckless with purpose), cabin leaders who aren't afraid to be vulnerable with him/her.

### *Spiritually*

- Characteristics: Doubting things he/she has always held true, dreams of being great for God, trouble focusing on daily walk with Christ, wants to be used by God but feels has messed up too much.
- Needs: To be convinced that God loves failures and uses them mightily, to see doubts answered in God's Word, be seen as valuable to God, church, family, friends.
- Learning Activities: Good devotionals, relevant speaker, consistent examples on and off field, relative-to-life memory verses, be shown Christianity is real and it works.