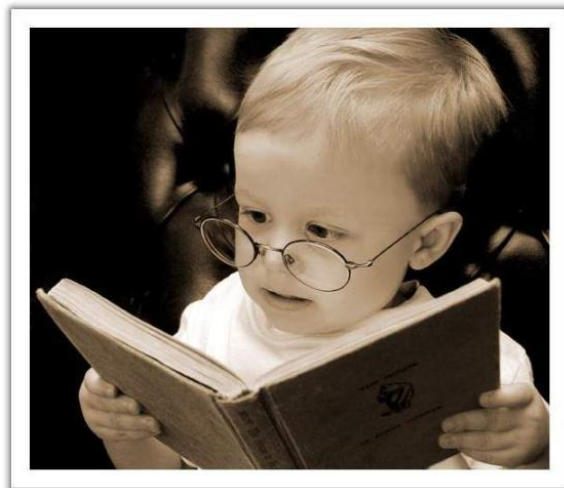




Counselor/Staff Training Manual



“PREPARING YOURSELF FOR CAMP”

Dear Big People,

Thanks for being a camp volunteer. You probably have other things to do today but you have to be at training instead.

I'm a little scared about going to camp, maybe you are too.

I hope you can learn some stuff and figure out how to help kids like me.

Kids like me, we really need some big people like you to keep us safe and help us with things we don't know.

What you learn in training may just help save my life.

Who knows, maybe you're the answer to my prayers.

Thanks... Future Camper

P.S. See you at camp!



PREFACE

Special appreciation is extended to the following contributors who have so willingly shared their expertise and time in creating this material.

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Special acknowledgement is extended to the staffs of the many camps who have shared their experiences through the years and helped us fine-tune this material.

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COUNSELOR/STAFF PREPARING FOR CAMP MANUAL

Royal Family KIDS®, Inc.

The name Royal Family KIDS®, Inc. and this Counselor/Staff Training Material are copyrighted and owned by Royal Family KIDS, Inc., (RFK) which is a California, non-profit corporation dedicated to reaching the abused and neglected children of Orange County, California, and aiding others throughout the nation and the world to reach all such children in their local area.

These materials are resources intended to assist others in the goal of reaching children. Permission to use these copyrighted materials and assistance in their use can be obtained from Royal Family KIDS, Inc. Permission to use the name and these materials must be obtained in writing and is subject to revocation at the discretion of Royal Family KIDS, Inc.

It is the desire of Royal Family KIDS, Inc. to assist others to provide quality camps which will accomplish the goals expressed in this manual and to learn from the experiences of others.

Royal Family KIDS, Inc. assumes no responsibility to or for churches, organizations or others who operate camps or otherwise use these materials. The authors have attempted to describe many areas of concern in training camp personnel; however, these materials are not exhaustive and laws, rules, and regulations which apply to you must be consulted before undertaking a camp. You should consult other professionals in their fields of expertise to assist you in properly establishing and operating your camp.

Thank you for volunteering this year and welcome!

You are a part of a world-wide Royal Family KIDS movement to significantly impact innocent victims of childhood abuse with the love and care of Christ. Your camp may be a first time for campers to experience positive examples of hope for their future. The importance of our task compels each of us to reach deeply within to give every bit of ourselves to our week at camp. Your effectiveness as a volunteer is in large measure proportionate to how much of yourself you are willing to invest in a child.

Jesus' method for helping others was always grounded in His love for them. It is this type of love and acceptance that campers crave. Campers receive 24-hour access to wonderful role models who reflect Christ's care for them.

This manual is entitled 'Preparing you for Camp'. RFK is not a soft and cuddly kind of camp; rather, it is purposely designed to be challenging, impactful and celebratory for both campers and volunteers. Many first year volunteers, as well as many camp veterans find the materials in this manual quite daunting, and the prospect of relating to our campers more challenging than they anticipated. The good news is that you are not alone. You will find many supportive like-minded Christians at camp who are positive, affirming, reassuring and focused on the cause of being a part of God's plan to bring hope to these young lives.

Every year at Royal Family KIDS brings new adventures. None of us have any idea what we are capable of until we come to the end of our comfort zone and find that God is there with us. The difficult things in life are often the ones that provide us with the most gratification. For our campers, we fervently desire to let them know that the challenging experiences of their lives are very different from the meaning of their lives. You have joined an "army of compassion" Confronting Abuse • Changing Lives!

For the children,



Wayne and Diane Tesch

Co-Founders

COMMITMENT FORM

Every counselor and staff person must sign this commitment form. The **original** copy of this form is to be kept in the local camp files.

I have received a copy of the Royal Family KIDS Camp Counselor / Staff Manual. I agree to read it and abide by all the procedures and policies therein.

I understand that my attendance at the required counselor and staff training sessions is a condition of my service to RFK Camp.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Camp Director

Location and date of camp

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The following is not “required” but is very helpful.

-Maximizing the Impact of Your Week with Campers

A guide for Brand New Volunteers, but useful for Experienced Volunteers too!

X. Bibliography and Glossary

WEBSITE SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCE SECTION

Available on the Website in the Training Library (*user name & password protected*)

Each of the eight Sections of this manual have supplemental resources in the Training Library, in addition to a document with the following items:

1. *A Spiritual Understanding of Working with Abused Children*
by Roger Heuser & Sam Southard
2. Graduate in Training
GIT Program for campers attending last year of camp
3. Reading/Resource List (Extensive) Recommended for staff and counselors
4. Royal Family KIDS Training Options
5. Gideon’s Story – A Camp Devotional

I. INTRODUCTION TO ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMPS



Royal Family KIDS has a great foundation and history. There is so much to be done and many volunteers are needed for a camp's success. Knowing the basics about the history, the team around you, and the spiritual foundation is vital for YOU to be part of a great team that will create life-changing moments at camp for kids of abuse.

A. Overview

1. RFK Camp Beginnings

The first question we are all interested in, is the one about how and why RFK started. The answer is in this brief description by the founder, Rev. Wayne Tesch, which is called *"Sounding the Call" on Behalf of Children of Abuse in Orange County (CA)*.

"It was Thursday, December 13, 1984, when a luncheon appointment was set with Rev. Fred Cottriel and Rev. Leonard Nipper, two officials of the Assemblies of God, Southern California District. During the meeting they shared with me the dream of Camp Pinecrest.

"Camp Pinecrest is nestled in the San Bernardino mountains at the 5,000 foot level. The camp is 160 acres, consisting of 16 newly built condominiums, with an additional 20 on the drawing board. There are 3 chateaus that will house 300 campers. There is a small lake that the Forest Service will stock with trout.

"During our luncheon conversation, they posed this question:

"Would you be interested in being a Camp Director for one week with a theme camp of your choice?"

"What an opportunity! I went back to my office to seek guidance and direction from the Lord for a camp. As I walked into the office, I shared with Jill Anderson the opportunity that was presented to me. She suggested a camp for children of abuse. It was as though God spoke directly. I knew in my heart at that moment God was opening a door for the children of abuse and abandonment in Orange County, California.

"Details were formulated to set down a timeline of accomplishments to form a 'camp.' First, a meeting was called with individuals who are trained in the specific needs of abandoned and foster

children. The objective was to determine if we could: (1) *secure 60 children, and (2) secure 20 counselors.*

“Their excitement and prayers were encouraging and uplifting – their involvement a MUST. The date of July 11-18 was targeted to launch the first week of camp. Research was begun on children of abuse in Orange County.

“Statistics of abused children in the county were shocking. In 1983, there were 7,811 mandated reports of child abuse. Mandated — a doctor, teacher, or psychologist calls or reports to the authorities the finding of such a child. In 1984, 10,592 mandated calls were projected. I was shocked and, at the same time, stirred, as I realized that we, the people of God, could impact those statistics in our community.

“In addition, in 50% of the 3,905 cases, the victim was under five years of age. Thirty-four percent of that group, or 1,328, were under two years of age. To compound the problem, there were only 650 foster homes in the county to harbor these children if and when, they are discovered, and this number was decreasing at 9% per year. I cried out, “*Dear Lord, these are kids who are wounded and need Your love.*”

“Sunday morning, January 6th, Rev. Bob Rogers, Director of Teen Challenge of Southern California, ministered in the morning services. He spoke on the topic of “*Anointed to Minister to the Poor.*” As I listened, my mind drifted to Camp Pinecrest with 60 children running, playing, and singing through the mountain terrain. I saw kids in rooms with a trained counselor sharing Biblical principles of life. I envisioned counselors hugging children, allowing them to realize that hands not only abuse, but hands can love. I prayed silently that morning that the people of Newport Mesa Christian Center would provide “healing hands” to ease the hurt of these children. In addition to providing healing, loving hands to these children, I saw people on their knees praying for the ministry of the camp — prayer support is critical and vital in this type of ministry. I also saw homes of love being opened to ease the pain of children.”

Wayne also says, “I see now how God had planted in my heart a dream to reach out to help children whose lives had been devastated by abuse and neglect. I can still remember a vision God gave me in a camp setting when I was only twelve years old. The vision showed a sea of faces of children from all nationalities and races. That vision became reality during the first RFKC in 1985.¹

¹ See Chapter Six, “How Dreams Come True,” in *Unlocking the Secret World* by Wayne & Diane Tesch, Tyndale House Publishers, 1995, for more detail.

“During that first week of camp, the needs of the children touched the hearts of all of us who worked at camp. We realized that if other churches got behind a program like RFKC, we could reach hundreds of abused children every year. So we began to challenge other churches to follow this simple model: organize a one-week summer camp for children of abuse in their own area. Child Protective agencies and foster families are eager to send children because their children miss out on many typical childhood experiences.”

Note: The RFK website will have the latest statistics available for the Camp and Club growth.

2. Introduction to the Training Schedule and Mission Statement

This pre-camp training is imperative for three reasons:

1. To acquaint and sensitize you, the staff and counselors, to the background and needs of the abused and neglected child.
2. To build specific counseling and leadership skills so that the counselor-camper relationships will be positive.
3. To build team unity and comradery.

During this first session, we will look at the spiritual basis for RFK, our mission statement, objectives, and brief job descriptions. We will also have other sessions to talk about you, the counselors and staff, detailed sessions about the campers, abuse and neglect, the week at camp, behavior management, and so on. We will give you lots of details and recommendations so you will know what to do.

Why are you here?

The Sears Catalog used to advertise many of its products as good, better, and best – such as Sears' *good*, *better*, and *best* dishwashers. Here are some *good*, *better*, and *best* reasons for volunteering for the RFK ministry.

GOOD reasons for volunteering to be a counselor/staff member at RFKC: curious; good for my resume; good place to meet a responsible, caring spouse; confront personal issues from my childhood

BETTER reasons for volunteering to be a counselor/staff member at

RFKC: personal growth; learn more about the nature and needs of abused and neglected kids; try being a Foster Parent for a week; fine tune my ability to work with children.

BEST reason for volunteering to be a counselor/staff member at RFKC:

to provide safety, fun, life-changing, positive memories, and a positive role model for children of abuse and neglect within the context of Christian values; to press into service the skills that I have, and see God provide for skills I do not have; to listen; to express genuine empathy and to love unconditionally without requiring anything in return for my investment.

The RFK **Mission Statement** which includes the **Counselor/Staff Code of Conduct** (*adapted from Deuteronomy 6:4-9*) lends support to the **best** reason for volunteering stated above:

We the people of Royal Family KIDS, Inc., believe in God’s Word that develops within us an obedience and trust in our Creator. We believe in His sovereignty and firmly accept the task, which now lies before us to reach out to the children of abuse and neglect of America. Our commitment to this group of children represents a new endeavor that the Church will undertake. With the assistance of our Lord, we will provide a warm and friendly atmosphere for each child. We will create life-changing moments and extend loving hands to these children.

We will model the Counselor Code of Conduct adapted from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 which says:

‘Hear, O Lord: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your campers, and shall TALK of them when you SIT in your cabin, and when you HIKE by the way and when you LIE down, and when you RISE. And you shall bind them, as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the door posts of your house (cabin) and on your gates.’ (As interpreted by Wayne Tesch)

The **PURPOSE** of the RFK, Inc. organization is:

Mobilize the faith community to confront child abuse

Our **MISSION** is to:

Create life-changing moments for children of abuse

The **VISION** of the organization is:

Every foster child, age 6 – 12, experiences a life-changing camp, club and mentor

Royal Family KIDS **Values**:



Treat People Royally



Make Moments Matter



Keep Moving Forward

3. Who's Who at RFKC

The RFKC team includes a large number of people and 20-25 different roles or areas of responsibility. Here's a brief introduction to the kinds of jobs and the people involved in this week.

Camper I probably don't know how to pray for myself or for the camp, so I'm very thankful all of you are doing it!

Counselor - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Know whereabouts of my campers every minute.
3. Share my P.M.A. all week.
4. Lead Campers in a meaningful week of camp

Director - the thing I do the most is to

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. I plan and promote the camp
3. I have a pair of asbestos boots to stomp out little fires.

Assistant Director - the thing I do the most is to

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Work closely with the director
3. Maintain morale - rah, rah!

Dean of Men/Dean of Women - the thing we do the most is to

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Assist in the selection of the counselors
3. Coordinate counselor/camper relationships and situations

Professional Counselor - the thing I do the most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP
2. Assist counselors to alleviate tension with campers and deal with troubling issues

Child Placement Coordinator - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Work with Social Services to contact potential campers
3. Call Counselors and give name and age of camper so counselors can plan room decorations, buy gifts, etc.

Nurse - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Collect medication at registration and screen campers for illness
3. Implement total health care program at camp

Activity Center Coordinator - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Prepare and run 20-25 creative Activity Centers that emphasize “process not product”

Bible Teacher -the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Teach Bible lessons to the campers

Music Director - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP
2. Direct the music and music activities all week

Coach - the thing I do the most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP
2. Plan and lead organized games each day

Photographer/Video/Sound Person - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Take a minimum of six photos of each camper for their Memory Book.
3. Operate sound equipment
4. Create video/slide show if needed for Friday

Counselor Relief Coordinators - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Provide relief personnel for counselors nightly

Grandpa/Grandma/Aunt/Uncle - the thing we do most if

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Give safe hugs/read stories to campers
3. Provide general assistance throughout camp.

Counselor Assistants -the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Work with assigned counselor
3. “Plug in” when necessary

Staff Assistants - the thing I do most is

1. PRAY FOR THE CAMP.
2. Work with assigned staff members

All Volunteers- the things we do for campers are:

1. Encouraging each one with love
2. Cheering their successes
3. Guiding them with patient wisdom
4. Observing creation together with awe and wonder
5. Helping them to recognize God in the midst of their lives

Note: On the following three pages are detailed job descriptions for the Camp Director, the Counselor and Staff in general. Additional detailed job descriptions for each job are available on the website in the Training Library / 101 Manual / Section I supplemental materials.

DIRECTOR

“L.E.A.D.”

John Maxwell says a good leader looks over their shoulder to see who is following. If no one is following, you are just taking a walk in the park! As a Director, have influence to accomplish the MISSION.

Listen: A leader is wise when he/she remembers that God gave 1 mouth to talk and 2 ears to listen.

Enthusiasm: Webster defines enthusiasm as a “fervor” or “feeling” as its No. 1 meaning, but the real meaning of the word is, “In God’s Spirit.” God who calls and provides will reside in us at all times.

Anticipate: Always anticipate your next move on schedule. If it rains, be ready, or in the case of one summer camp, SNOW. Be ready.

Delegate: This is a leader's way of incorporating many hands into the work of planning and executing. As a director, delegate with authority and responsibility.

“Love Every Adult Daily”

STAFF

“H.E.L.P.”

As part of the staff, your attitude should scream out, “Whatever it takes, we can do it.” Remember you will be creating the structure by which God’s spirit can minister.

Handy: Be ready, willing, able, and handy to do anything at any time to create positive memories for the campers.

Encourage: Develop the language of a positive support for campers, counselors, or staff. Encourage individuals to reach their fullest potential.

Level: Maintain a calming influence during difficult situations. Have a leveling effect rather than a volcano in dealing with people.

Pleasant: Smile and be approachable. See the positive side of things. Even when you feel your position doesn't “get the ink” for what you do — in spite of it, He will reward you. We do it all FOR THE KIDS — with a smile.

COUNSELOR

“L.O.V.E.”

What is a counselor? See job descriptions.

Loves the Lord and Kids: When your priorities are correct and you love the Lord, your campers will experience the power of God's love through you.

Open Heart: Open your heart to the children. Let them come in swearing, kicking, biting, swinging, and trying to manipulate the time. With an open heart, the children will see Christ in you. See "Counselor Code of Conduct," in Counselor/Staff Training Manual.

Vulnerable Counselors say, "Should my camper see me cry?" Of course. Maybe the only tears they have seen are tears of anger or sadness. Let them see you demonstrate true emotions.

Energy: This is a quiet energy. This means you can walk and play, hike and swim. Please conserve your energy by getting enough rest.

B. Spiritual Foundation of RFKC

Keep in mind that most of these children have never had a positive, wholesome experience at camp. The overriding environment that should pervade an RFKC is a positive, affirming, non-judgmental atmosphere.

Most of these children not only come from a background that is devoid of Christian values, many of the Christian values they have experienced have been warped or skewed depending on the severity of their past experience. **Therefore, be advised that references which we all make in Christian circles that refer to spiritual things, i.e. our “Christianese” language, tends to create a barrier for these children.**

For example: “God is love,” “He is our heavenly father and he loves you” may be misinterpreted by a child of abuse or neglect because a father who “loved” them also abused, molested or neglected them.

We must see ourselves as being **one small part** in the entire process of rebuilding hope in these children. It **may** be our experience to simply provide the initial love and affirmation that only begins to soften the encrusted shell that this child may have developed to survive in life. This is a beginning. Beyond this may be opportunities to sow the seed of a gospel witness. But the objective must never be that we can till, water, sow, cultivate and reap — all in one short week at RFKC. Remember what Paul said in I Corinthians 3:6 *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.”*

Royal Family KIDS, Inc. is a Christian ministry. Royal Family KIDS Camps (RFKC) are Christian camps. The founders, with extensive experience in Christian children’s camps, have observed powerful life-changes in the children who are involved in camp. The vision for this ministry to children of abuse and neglect is to provide the same opportunity for children who, because of their difficult circumstances, may never experience it otherwise. This is why you are here.

There is a scriptural and spiritual basis underlying this effective ministry, a ministry to the oppressed and the downtrodden. Founder Wayne Tesch, wrote the following paragraphs in the first RFKC counselor/staff training manual:

“I find that the benefits of being involved in helping the abused and neglected are at the very core of Christ’s ministry. Luke 4:18, 19 states clearly why Royal Family KIDS, Inc. was established. Christ says, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach

good news to the **poor**. He has sent me to proclaim **freedom** for the **prisoners** and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' **Our desire is to heal the broken hearted, release the oppressed, and liberate the downtrodden."**

"The camping environment is an excellent model to allow the Spirit of Christ and His Word to make a lasting impression on the children. The children are blessed, but as a pastor, I am aware of how many of the adults who give up a week of their vacation are blessed also. Henrietta Mears, the well known and revered Sunday School authority, stated that *"one week of camp is equivalent to a year of time spent in Sunday School."* What a great opportunity for the church to provide a ministry model to its own community with the Good News."

It has been truthfully said that children are the paradigm of the Kingdom of God. Jesus' words in Matthew 19:14 make this very clear, *"Let the little children come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven"*. And he went much further, stating, *"Truly I say unto you, unless you are converted and become like children you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."* (Matthew 18:3) And then, in some of the strongest words our Lord ever spoke, *"Whoever humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one such child in my name receives me."* Imagine! *"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea."* (Matthew 18:4-6) **There can be no doubt as to how strongly Jesus felt about the care of and concern for children!**

So when you, as a counselor or staff member in a Royal Family KIDS Camp minister to a child of abuse or neglect, you touch a need that doubly touches the heart of God. You reach two of His highest priorities, the oppressed and the downtrodden, and the child, who is the very model of the kingdom of heaven. Can there be any higher calling? In blessing these children you will be blessed.

The Mission Statement of Royal Family KIDS, Inc. speaks to the importance of your work as a vital Christian ministry, "to create life-changing moments." For some of the children, the life-changing moments may be emotional moments, for some they may be physical, for others the moments may be social or spiritual. But for all, we believe they are moments that will change their lives.

What about bringing the child to Jesus?

We are a Christian camp. **To the “Social Services” community, we are identified as a “faith-based” camp.** What are appropriate ways for us to share our faith with the campers? They will come to camp with such a variety of experiences, and most of them will have had no previous knowledge or experience of who Jesus is.

A few years ago a term became popular in seminaries and Bible schools because of the important redirection it gave to evangelism. The term was “incarnational evangelism.” This meant simply that individuals are more likely to come to Christ when they **see** Jesus lived through the everyday lives of Christians than when they are told what to do to become a Christian. **Deeds are always more effective than words.** Jesus very clearly set forth this model of evangelism when he said, *“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)*

Since it is the deep desire of Royal Family KIDS to lead each child to a wholesome life lived in Jesus Christ the counselor may feel that his or her primary obligation is to continually talk about the plan of salvation in an attempt to lead the child to Jesus. The experience of the leadership of Royal Family KIDS has been that ***it is not appropriate*** to pressure any child to go to the altar, or to continually ask a child to pray the prayer of salvation. This is defined by Social Services as coercion or “proselytizing.” This simply is not the most effective way to work with these children and is prohibited by Social Services. Many of them have been unduly pressured by adults to say and do many things, and as such, many may have built up a strong resistance to an adult’s encouragement to do something, or they too easily agree to an adult’s encouragement out of fear.

If you have come from a background where new converts are “invited to make a decision to walk forward and accept Jesus Christ,” be aware of the group dynamics that takes place among these children. This process can “spiritually abuse” the children because they do not understand the emotional setting that has been created and, therefore, may not be responding on a spiritual level but on an emotional level. That is why we avoid any group appeals, with these children an individual invitation is more appropriate when they “ask” following the Joshua chapter 4 model.

A Biblical example would be that RFK follows “Question Evangelism” based on Joshua chapter 4. The people of Israel crossed over the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. God told Joshua to take 12 stones out

of the river and place them on the side where they were going. Why did they do this? Chapter 4 vs. 21-23 states:

“When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’ then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan...”

This now becomes a model, when the children **ASK**, then we can tell them the great things the Lord has done for us! If they don’t ask, then we don’t pressure them. If they ask, we answer their questions without pressure.

Your relationship with Jesus Christ:

As a counselor or staff member, it is important to know that you acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ in your own life. It is His life within you (*Galatians 2:20*) that will bring hope into the lives of these children. Most campers have never seen or received the benefits of living with a life filled with the fruits of the Spirit (*i.e. love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control - Galatians 5:22*). You will be bringing a “cup of cold water” to these children (*Matthew 10:42*) when you care for them with the love defined in 1 Corinthians 13 (*i.e. with patience, kindness, no jealousy, no boasting, no arrogance, no unbecoming behavior, no selfishness, not provoked, not rejoicing in wrong nor unrighteousness, rejoicing in the truth, bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things*).

Let it be your desire that, through your example of Christ’s love, you would draw these children into the redeeming hand of Jesus. He, through you, will be the “repairer of broken walls” (*Isaiah 58:12*) He, through you, can give meaning, value and purpose to a life crushed by trauma . As the Psalmist wrote, *“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18)*. On this premise walk forward into camp in the name of Christ to serve these children.

Prayer and the power of God’s love

All of the members of Royal Family pray continually that the love of God will permeate and enfold each moment of the campers’ week with us, that for this time they would know the protection and care found in Jesus Christ and that the seeds of truth planted into their hearts

(perhaps even more by our lives than by our words) would, in the timing of the Holy Spirit, bring them into a personal relationship with Jesus.

To create an atmosphere of love, safety and fun, all counselors and staff members are encouraged to pray for God's banner to be over the camp. Throughout the day, all counselors, staff and support people are encouraged to recognize and pray accordingly for whatever situation in which they find themselves, or of which they are made aware. There are times (meals, chapel, devotions, etc.) that the campers have an opportunity to pray or hear our prayers.

Each camper, however, should experience only the light and love of our Lord Jesus Christ as seen through you.

CAMP STORY-

Here is a story to conclude this section on letting the children see and experience Christ through you. The Lancaster, CA, camp was celebrating their 20th anniversary and a volunteer told this story. A blind camper asked a male volunteer if she could touch his face. The volunteer felt uncomfortable with this but said "yes" because he knew camp was about the campers needs not his own needs. As the girl camper touched his face she said, *"I feel like I'm touching the face of Jesus"*. The volunteer immediately became uncomfortable and began saying, *"No, no, no, I'm not Jesus, don't compare me with Jesus."* Then the girl said these incredible words, she said *"This week you have been Jesus to me!"* This camper was blind, but she had a vision of Jesus through the volunteers who simply let Jesus live through them at camp. You, too, can allow your campers to see Jesus living through you at camp.

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

The Counselor Code of Conduct, Deuteronomy 6:4-6, as described in this Section of this Manual, is practiced throughout the week at camp in many ways. One of the significant ways is teaching the children a trust in God as we 'walk and talk' throughout the day and evening at camp. When we do this, we creatively weave God's presence into our daily lives and the life of the camper, making him/her aware of the God we know, love and serve.

The following are key moments during the week of camp that a counselor or staff member can bring the camper to an awareness of God and the importance of His presence in our lives. State agencies that refer

the children to Royal Family KIDS Camps will, generally speaking, not object to a child participating in these practices. They are a part of RFKC. (An expanded list is now available in the Addendum Chapter IX– **Maximizing the Impact of Your Week with Campers** “A guide for Camp Rookies, but useful for everyone”

1. PRAYER AT MEALS

Acknowledging God at mealtimes is a non-threatening way to encourage a child to begin to pray to God and thank him for something very important to their daily lives – food. This can be done in various ways as we have seen demonstrated at various camps:

Group prayer outside the dining hall:

An adult staff person accompanies the child at the microphone and can pray a phrase at a time for the child to repeat, if they are unfamiliar with praying on their own. Or the child may feel very comfortable with praying all by themselves. This is role modeling the importance of mealtime prayers.

Another method is to have an adult staff member or a child pray aloud in the dining room, using the microphone. Some camps even include brief prayer requests for those in camp who might need a special prayer, i.e., the Camp Grandma is having difficulty with her hip; camper Joey’s mom is having surgery tomorrow. This teaches the children that God is concerned about our everyday needs as well as for providing our daily food—‘teachable moments.’

Some camps use a coffee can to place Popsicle sticks inside with each child’s name written on them. The sticks are marked green on one end and red on the other. On Monday, all the sticks are placed in the can with the green ends up. When an opportunity arises during the week for a child to be chosen (praying for the meal, leading the group in an activity, etc.) a child’s name is drawn out of the can. If he wants to participate, the stick is placed back in the can with the red end up, meaning he has already been chosen during the week. If the child chooses not to participate, the stick is returned to the can with the green end still up. This means he/she can be chosen again for another responsibility at a later time. When all the sticks have red ends up, you begin all over choosing the children, now that everyone has had a turn to be invited to lead the group. (This method also prevents some children from always being chosen to do something special, while drawing out a shy or reticent child who might never volunteer, but would willingly participate if asked to do so by this method.)

2. 30/30 TIME

Many children become more reflective when they are in a situation where it is quiet and restful. This is a time during the day when the campers can lay on their bed and read, work on their Camper Handbook or do some other quiet activity. This may be a time when the campers seem to 'open up' and want to talk more than at other times of the day. The counselors should be trained to recognize the opportunity to visit with the camper if he/she has a question, a comment or wants to discuss lessons that were taught earlier during chapel or Bible time.

3. CAMPER ACTIVITY BOOK

It is recommended that counselors assist the campers with their Camper Activity Books during rest time. This is a time when the counselor can answer questions or describe/interpret the morning's chapel lesson or a concept from the drama or a life principle that was being made during the Bible story. Counselors should be trained to be sensitive to an opportunity or question from the child, to teach a Biblical principle in response to a child's questions when they are working on their Activity Book during quiet times in the room.

4. ACTIVITY CENTERS

The Deuteronomy 6 'Counselor Code of Conduct' is MOST visibly demonstrated during Activity Center times. Activity Centers are the bedrock of Royal Family as being able to accomplish things with the campers that will never be accomplished any other way through the week of camp.

Activity Centers were designed to be spread out throughout the camp – to encourage WALKING AND TALKING ALONG THE WAY. Because some climates are so HOT or the terrain or camp facility does not lend itself to this arrangement, some camp directors place the centers all in one central location or inside a building (because it's cooler, etc.). This is not the intent of Activity Centers. The intent was to spread them out so counselors and campers would be given the opportunity to converse along the way as they move from one center to another. This arrangement also reduces the noise and commotion all in one location. Wise counselors will look for opportunities to relate something very ordinary, for example: a squirrel scurrying around the tree looking for a place to hide a nut--as the wisdom of God seen in a squirrel who instinctively knows to bury nuts in the summer so he will have food stored up for the winter. How wise God was to create squirrels to be so

smart! Pointing these things out to a camper are ‘teachable moments’ along the way.

Other moments may arise while sitting at an Activity Center working on a project, pointing out how creative the child is and how God gave us our minds to create a beautiful world for ourselves and others to enjoy. This pleases Him. Activity Centers make Teachable Moments happen during a week at Royal Family.

5. DEVOTIONS AT NIGHT

More than any other time of the day, children instinctively become more open and willing to share at bedtime, because their senses are beginning to relax. If children come from an unchurched home where personal disciplines or Godly principles are not practiced in their daily lives, they will not be familiar with the routine or ‘ritual’ of having a quiet time with God before bedtime. This can be an excellent time to talk about the morning chapel story or reading a scripture or Bible story before bedtime. Saying a brief prayer at bedtime may help to quiet the child who is ‘afraid’ to go to sleep or is ‘afraid’ of the dark. This is a teachable moment that the child can take home from camp and begin to practice in his/her daily life after camp.

6. SING SONGS

Music can be a ‘healing salve’ to a wounded soul. Songs, such as “I Will Change Your Name”, give a child hope that God can change the ‘muck and mire’ in their lives to make something good out of it. Songs can replace worrisome thoughts and fears that our campers so often are plagued with throughout the day. Psalm 40 says “He put a new song in my mouth--A song of praise to our God.” Teaching and singing a new song to a troubled child can change their countenance and give hope. The music learned at camp can also be a lasting gift that we give the children to take home to enjoy throughout the whole year. The camp music tapes can be played in the campers’ rooms to help them learn the words and enjoy hearing them played. Music played quietly can have a calming effect on a child who feels distraught. Explaining the words to Christian songs can help the child understand the meaning as he/she sings the song. These become ‘teachable moments.’

7. BIBLE READING

Reading God’s Word and explaining the words can be ‘teachable moments.’ If campers have difficulty reading, the counselor should read the scriptures for them and explain what it means.

8. REVIEW OF THE DAY

Part of a nightly ritual with the campers might be to talk about what the day held for each of the campers – the good things that happened, favorite activities they participated in, things they learned, etc. The wise counselor can usually incorporate into the discussion an appreciation for God’s provisions of the day, how good God is to all of us to allow us to be at camp, how he cared for us throughout the day and kept us safe, etc. This directed conversation can allow the counselor to learn things about the camper that may help him/her to better relate to the child during the remainder of the week.

Memories

One of our goals as a team is to “**create life-changing moments**” for each camper. We really believe that camp is the “week that lasts a life time”. If you believe it can happen with God’s help, then it will happen!

CLOSE

What are your personal take-a-ways from this section?