

SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

BEFORE CAMP

1. Make sure your child knows what to take to camp. Let him or her do their own packing with your assistance (not vice versa). They are 'GOING ON AN ADVENTURE', rather than, 'WE ARE SENDING THEM TO CAMP'.
2. Try to be HOPEFUL of the week and TRUSTING of the youth and their leaders. This can help build positive expectations in the youth.
3. If homesickness becomes an issue:
 - a. Affirm that, "Yes, it is sometimes scary to be away from home." "We're glad that your friends will be with you." or "We are happy you will be making new friends."
 - b. Affirm that, "Yes, we will miss you, too, but we'll have a full week, just as you will."
 - c. **Don't encourage the youth by saying, "Call if you get homesick." Our staff is competent to help your child deal with homesickness if it should occur.**
4. Be sure the Camper Health Form has been completed and signed by you. **NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED TO CAMP WITHOUT IT!! NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

DURING CAMP

Write to your child during camp. Your letter or card could appropriately include:

1. Reports on what is happening in the family and town (conveying, however, that "our life goes on without you, but that is okay.") This is a learning that must come with growing.
2. Inquiry about how camp is going (conveying that, "We miss you and care for you.")
3. Statements of eagerness to hear about camp (conveying that, "We expect it to be important"). Send letters or cards to: **Kamp Kaleo, 46872 Willow Springs Rd., Burwell, NE 68823**

AFTER CAMP

1. While your child will be encouraged to write to you during camp, he or she may not have written at all, or as much as you may have liked. Certainly you are free to express that feeling, but caution should be used not to create feelings of guilt.
2. Coming home after a week at camp is difficult. There is so much to talk about, yet a guardedness about it, too. Parents will do well to make it clear that they can and will listen, but not insist that the returning camper talk if not ready to talk.
3. At this point, it is a matter of genuinely responding to the camper's needs. Going to camp is an adventure that will bring new experiences and new understandings. Your camper may try to incorporate new learning into his or her daily life. Be open to this. If changes cause you to wonder, show interest in what is being attempted and talk with your camper about them.
4. Leaders will have come to know your child in significant ways. It is all right to ask them how you can better respond to your child, but please don't expect them to betray trusts of a meaningful relationship.
5. Ask your pastor how you can help with the Christian nurturing of youth throughout the year.

The Outdoor Ministry program is planned and provided by the Outdoor Ministry Committee of the Nebraska Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciple of Christ) in Nebraska.