

# FOCUS 2

*“A publication series prepared specifically for training summer camp workers in Lake Aurora programs.”*

## COUNSELOR CENTERED PROGRAM

**C**ounselor centered programming allows for every camper to be placed into a small group so he can have the maximum experiences while having constant supervision. It also insures that each camper will receive individual attention.

*Since the camper is being coached by the same person, day and night, the counselor will have great opportunity to minister to the camper.*



### 9 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COUNSELING

1. Try to gain the respect of the campers by showing them individual attention.
2. Try to build bridges to each camper over which you can walk to share the gospel.
3. Look for that “teachable moment” in the life of the camper, and be prepared to seize it.
4. Help your assigned group of campers to learn to function as a unit, thus they will help each other and lighten your load.
5. Try to help each camper accomplish his personal agenda, thus he will be receptive to helping you accomplish yours.
6. Learn each camper’s name quickly.
7. When communicating with a camper, first try to understand his view before trying to get him to understand yours.
8. Help the camper develop a routine that includes personal responsibility.
9. Share with the campers your personal expectations of them.

### Counselor Ratios

Grades 1,2,3	1 staff to 5 campers
Grades 3-9	1 staff to 8 campers
Grades 10+	1 staff to 10 campers

Counselors will be expected to be in contact with their assigned campers at all times, unless the campers have been specifically assigned to another staff.

Exceptions to the above ratios may occur during large group activities (such as chapel, vespers, or free time) but campers are never to be left totally unsupervised.

### Qualifications of Counselors

- Must be out of high school and at least 2 years older than the oldest camper to work with grades 9 or older. Minimum age of counselor for children’s programs is 16 or entering grade 11.
- Regular attender and of good report within the owner/supporting network of churches.
- Properly screened as to suitability to work with children.
- Mentally, emotionally, and spiritually stable.

## Goals For Counselors

1. Take the opportunity to talk privately with each camper concerning his “walk with the Lord.” Follow up on the openings that develop.
2. Encourage each camper to make some personal choices in activities. This may be in free time, in finding time to take a walk, run, workout, go fishing, or read.
3. Help the campers find the value of quiet times as well as active times. Help them take responsibility for their own thoughts.
4. Help them develop an environmental awareness because, “this is my Father’s world.”
5. Help them learn to make good decisions and accept responsibility for their decisions. Show them how to apply biblical principles.
6. Contrasts you encounter may include:
  - Love/Hate
  - Forgiveness/Retaliation
  - Mercy/Consequences
  - Acceptance/Rejection
  - Fairness/Unfairness

## Finding The Teachable Moment



Camp is a 24 hour a day laboratory where great things happen. Because of the accumulative effect of the program, many teaching opportunities present themselves.

Classes will serve as foundational material, but the real teaching opportunities will probably come at other times.

Your every action and attitude will be scrutinized and your opportunity to say or do the right thing may take place without you even knowing it. You will literally be “a sermon in shoes.”

The Counselor Centered Program will help you build a bridge you can cross to present the Gospel. Do not be surprised

(continued)

if that opportunity comes at an unusual time. Being with the campers for long periods of time will give you more opportunity for ministry. Be prepared to seize that teachable moment.

## Housing Check In

If at all possible, plan to be at camp by the time campers are ready to check into their dorms. ***It will be your opportunity to welcome the campers and meet the parents.***

If the camper has special needs, this would be a good time to discuss it with the parents.

The need to get acquainted quickly with the camper and build a bridge of friendship cannot be over emphasized.

You can establish your role quickly by helping the camper to get adjusted to camp life. This will identify you to the camper as a valuable part of the camp program.

Plan to answer questions about camp life, from swimming and fishing to meals and bedtime.

Help the camper find his assigned bed and, perhaps, even help him make his bed.

Do NOT underestimate the impact the first encounter and hour can have on a camper’s week.

## How To Get To Know Your Campers

- ☞ Study the Camper Profiles.
- ☞ Ask lead questions: Have you been here before? What city are you from? What is your home church? Have you met any new friends yet? What is the best part of camp? I am here to help, so let me know when I can help you, okay?
- ☞ Observe them.
- ☞ Be interested in them, but do not dominate them.
- ☞ Help them believe you are approachable.
- ☞ Look for ways to show them kindness.
- ☞ Don’t try to act like them, they need someone to respect.
- ☞ Try and help them accomplish their personal agenda.
- ☞ Always let them know where and how to find you.

# Campers With Special Needs

## NOTES

The camper profile will list any special needs known to the camp office. As you learn of other needs, please inform the appropriate leaders and note them on the camper profile.

## Meal Time Opportunities

1. You will either eat with your counselor group or be assigned to a table to serve as a counselor.
2. Make eating a relaxing and enjoyable experience.
3. Model and teach good manners.
4. Encourage the campers to eat rather than play in their food.
5. If you have complaints about the food, express them privately with the appropriate person.
6. Encourage the campers to drink plenty of fluids — at least 2 glasses at each meal. Dehydration is DEADLY.
7. Meal time singing can be fun and help with camp spirit. Help it to compliment the meal and not compete with it at breakfast or lunch.
8. Support the dining hall staff by following the serving and clean up procedures completely. Encourage your campers to go the extra mile in cleanup.
9. Chewing gum is damaging when placed on plates or in the carpet. Please help keep gum out of the dining hall.
10. Help the campers find the food they like. If enough choices are not offered, talk with the Food Service Manager, to see if some changes can be made.
11. The food service staff will make an effort to offer variety throughout the program. Since most campers are not used to eating a variety of foods, you may need to encourage them to try something new.
12. Shoes or sandals are required in the dining hall.
13. Help develop a respect for property. They are paid for by the donations of many faithful friends. **Do not allow** standing in chairs, banging dishes, or sitting on tables, etc..

# Finding Private Time

Each counselor should **find 2 hours** of personal time each day, *though not necessarily in a single block*. This will help you keep the frustrations you experience in perspective and make you more effective.

## Tips for finding those 2 hours:

1. Team up with another counselor group for some activities.
2. Ask one of the administrative team to take your campers for a period.
3. Take advantage of Omega staff supported activities.
4. If you are also doing the teaching, then consider joining with another group occasionally.
5. Ask the Assistant Program Director to help you find time.
6. Network with others at staff meeting to find time.
7. In most programs, one counselor can leave the dorm after lights out but the remaining counselor must be 18 or older.

## And There's Always Paperwork...

**Camper Profile.** This will be placed in a folder in your box in Studio B or Hillside-Studio Sea within the first 24 hours of camp. It will list information on each of your campers, and it will have a series of areas in which you should give a written evaluation of the camper. These are VERY important for followup, discipline, or consideration in leadership programs. **Please complete them!**

**Accident/Incident Report.** This will also be in your folder. Please log each serious incident or accident in which you get involved. Typical incidents include: fighting, cursing, stealing, emotional abnormalities, disruptive behavior, antisocial behavior, disrespect, property damage, and rule violations.

**Activity Sign-up Sheet.** This is completed on Sunday and given to the Activity Director so your daily schedule can be prepared. Please give consideration to all the requests of the group. You will have your daily schedule by faculty meeting each morning.

# AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

\*\*\* Many camp weeks overlap these age spans. Please contact the camp office to receive a copy of the age group characteristics that reflect the age characteristics of the particular week you are working with.

## Grades 1-3:

### PHYSICAL

Active and energetic  
Boys and girls are about the same size and strength

### EMOTIONAL

Immature  
Cry easily and comforted easily  
Believes what adults say without much question

### SOCIAL

Limited expression  
Loves personal attention from teacher  
Likes group activities but will have individual differences with who gets to go first, etc.

### INTELLECTUAL

Interest span is 7-15 minutes  
Needs visuals and other aids to keep attention  
First graders are barely reading  
Good imaginations  
Good at memorization

### SPIRITUAL

Beginning to understand Christ's role as the only Son of God  
Understand Bible stories are "real"  
Develop understanding of right and wrong from Bible stories

### RESPONDING TO 1-3 GRADERS

Ask volunteers to read  
Patience is a requirement  
Plan activities to expend energy  
Teaching time short, use games and activities to teach lesson point  
Most are not ready to make a decision for Christ  
Like rewards for job well done

## Grades 10-12:

### PHYSICAL

Habits forming for life  
Extreme concern for appearance  
Excessive appetite

### EMOTIONAL

Emotions intense and fluctuating  
Need for excitement and stimulus  
Desires group security

### SOCIAL

Attraction to opposite sex  
At times, rebellious to authority  
Copies what he thinks is grown-up  
Likes a crowd

### INTELLECTUAL

Needs reasons for everything  
Idealistic  
Remembers ideas better than words  
Concern for the future

### SPIRITUAL

Doubts arise  
Has ability, may desire to serve  
Religion becomes personal

### RESPONDING TO 10-12 GRADERS

Don't degrade their looks  
Model right behavior, including proper motivation  
Earn their respect  
Encourage and counsel  
Stand firm when right  
Teach the "why" with the "what, where, when and how"

## Grades 4-6:

### PHYSICAL

Strong, healthy, active  
Slow growth (resting period before adolescence)

### EMOTIONAL

Little control of emotions  
Doesn't rely on adult approval, but needs adult relationships  
Wide range of emotional maturity

### SOCIAL

Dislikes outward display of emotion  
Indifferent or antagonistic to opposite sex  
Hero-worshiper  
Healthy respect for authority  
Friends a major role in lives

### INTELLECTUAL

Memorizes easily  
Great curiosity  
Demands fairness and justice  
Wide range of reading skills

### SPIRITUAL

Developing value system  
Capable of making decision for Christ  
Emotions mix with Bible knowledge

### RESPONDING TO 4-6 GRADERS

Use Bible verse memorization contests  
Activities to expend energy  
Ask for volunteers to read, act, etc. don't force  
Give responsibilities  
Don't be critical or nag, use humor and genuine love  
Develop a sense of "group acceptance"  
Emotions are touched off easily  
Go "one on one" if accepted  
Group with same sex  
Stress Christian moral code (right/wrong blessing/consequence)

## "When you're old enough you can..."

To aid in the camper's development, a progression of activities has been developed to encourage his return each year. The items marked indicate an age group can participate in that activity in their program.

Grade	Counselor Groups by housing	Family Groups	Double Zipline	Plenic	Galleian Service	Giann's Swing	Cookout	Beach Party	Dress up Banquet	Blot	Power Boat	Uniform Schedule	Invitation for Baptism	Life Recruit
1,2,3	R													
2,3,4	R													
3,4,5	R			O									Tu	
4,5,6	R			O	O					R	R	R	Tu	
5,6,7	R		O	O	O					R	R	R	R	
6,7,8	R		O	O	O	O				R	R	R	R	
7,8,9	R		O	O	O	O				R	R	C	R	Intro
9-12		R	O	O	O	O	O	O	R	O	C	R	R	R
M.A.C.	R		O	O	O	O		O	R	O	R			Intro

## Grades 7-9:

### PHYSICAL

Quick growth  
Sexual maturity  
Often tired, clumsy, hungry

### EMOTIONAL

Unpredictable  
Can be embarrassed, temperamental, critical  
Self-image based on physical factors

### SOCIAL

Security with peers (cliques)  
Critical of others  
Desire for independence  
Competitive  
Friends major role in lives

### INTELLECTUAL

Beginning to think abstractly and logically  
Impulsive decisions and judgements  
Creative  
Desire to be treated like an adult

### SPIRITUAL

Voice doubts and even disbelief in God  
Keen sense of right and wrong  
Wants to serve

### RESPONDING TO 7-9 GRADERS

Don't degrade looks or compare to others  
Spend time  
Be patient  
Give specific facts and proofs for teaching  
Projects for the less fortunate are acceptable  
Demonstrate how God can use them NOW  
Model right behavior (hero-worship)  
Choices - giving freedom to choose  
Ready to make decisions for Christ  
Praise successes

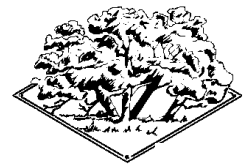
## HOW TO USE THIS ARTICLE

Program Directors: Make as many copies as you need to distribute to your counselors and administration.

Counselor: Study this "Focus" training material and request the next number in the series from your Program Director.

### LEGEND

R = Required  
O = Optional  
C = Choice



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2/1/2019