

## Preparation for Summer Staff

After the training course has been completed, there are still several weeks prior to the actual summer staff experience. Important things can be accomplished during this waiting period. Many of the disappointments or misunderstandings regarding summer staff can be significantly reduced with thoughtful preparation before arriving at the Young Life camp. Unexpressed or over fantasised expectations need to be avoided. God will uniquely and powerfully bless your week of service, but quite often it is much different than what we expected. The following suggestions might be helpful as you get ready for this big adventure.

- 1. Pray for the Week.** Try to build into your regular schedule a time to talk to God about what is in store for you. Go through the list of others on the team; the bosses, the camp leaders, the speaker etc. and get to know them by praying for them. Be outward (not inward) in your prayer attitude. Ask God not simply to bless you but the others as well in your future community. Ask Him to challenge you with new and different friendships, to put you in stretching situations, to learn from stress instead of taking it away! Talk with Him about your openness to surprise and hardship. Rather than tell Him what you want (job, living situation, boss, best friend, etc.) ask Him to make you spiritually ready for each day and the challenges before you. You will be amazed how He will answer your prayers.
- 2. Be tolerant and accepting of your summer staff bosses.** Your bosses on summer staff, for certain, will be human. The chances are very good that you will develop a wonderful (and perhaps lasting) relationship with your summer staff boss. Each summer, loving and capable people are assigned to be summer staff bosses. Their influence on your life can be significant. But, remember the stress of responsibility, the heavy work load, and the many complications that occur at camp everyday may leave them exhausted and irritable from time to time, They will not be able to give equal time and attention to each summer staff person. You might notice things in their character that are less than perfect. At times you might feel ignored and rejected by your boss. It takes a well prepared and spiritually mature summer staff person to remember that we are serving the Lord primarily, not the campers or the bosses. Respect them, support them, be honest with them and accept and encourage them in the reality of their humanity and weakness! They are trained to do that with you.
- 3. Trust God with the spiritual results.** As you prepare for camp give yourself the freedom and challenge to serve with all your heart and be excited for how God will work uniquely and individually with each camper. Numbers will never measure the spiritual impact of a week at camp. Quite often it will not be until years later that we know what God really has in mind during a particular week of camp. Ask yourself "How well did we serve" rather than "How many did we reach" as you evaluate how camp went.
- 4. Deal with difficult areas in your life while on summer staff.** With a loving, Christian community and a tremendous job to accomplish, summer staff becomes an ideal setting for personal growth. Analyse your life and ask God to help you mature in those areas which might need special attention. Let your club leaders and summer staff bosses know what you are working on. They might be a real support. Summer staff is a great place to "drop the old and commit to the new."

Things such as:

### Personal Discipline

- Getting up on time
- not procrastinating

- cleanliness
- adequate sleep
- regular devotional times.

**Authority**

- Following directions
- taking orders
- cheerfully responding to leadership
- questioning in respectful ways

**Relationships**

- Breaking destructive social habits of relating to others
- learning how to affirm
- encourage

**Personal Habits**

- Eating
- Drinking
- Smoking
- Talking
- dressing patterns which might need change.

Believe that God's plan for your time will be just what you need, filled with joy, growth, service, and maturity. You won't be disappointed.



YoungLife Australia