



REMEMBER

- Community is not a stand alone structure. It is actually a by-product of pulling together in the same direction.
- Culture is “caught not taught”, modeled by leaders who dare to say: “Follow me as I follow Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1).
- Intentionally and repeatedly communicating the specific vision you are inviting your staff to carry together can inspire, motivate and connect your team.
- Praying and worshiping have a way of drawing others together. Invite your staff to lean into God with each other and make space to pray for each other regularly.

“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.”

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer



RECOGNIZE

- Positive camp culture comes from leadership that values and provides caring relationships, intentional encouragement/gratefulness, practical support, and clearly articulated expectations about behaviour and attitudes.
- Differences in personality, perspective, interests, and styles of relating can easily act as barriers unless we intentionally create places to stand together. Sharing experiences (apart from the regular camp tasks), making space to listen to each other, and drawing attention to the things we share need to be an intentional part of team-building.
- An individual sense of belonging and significance is essential for a culture of connectedness. Making a point to identify, name and appreciate qualities and potential in each staff for which you are directly responsible creates a sense of being seen and known as “God’s masterpiece created for good works” (Eph. 2:10). We need to echo his heart - publicly and privately.
- Time is limited at camp so consider creating a plan to have a caring conversation with each staff member you are directly responsible for before camp begins, creating a foundation to build on. Find out about their hopes and fears for the summer plus any weight they are carrying from home.



RESPOND

- **Dream big.** Put words on the culture you want to invite your staff into and share the dream with them. Ask for their input on things that will help and hinder the dream becoming reality.
- **Share power.** When people are consulted it tells them that they are valued. Share power with your staff by inviting them into decisions and problem-solving, especially around staff culture issues. This invites ownership and a greater sense of responsibility for team success.
- **Build an “Us”.** Look for ways to provide bridges between your staff, constructed from the things they share. Create a unique identity together (I.e. “We are the people who ...!”) and celebrate that identity in fun and serious ways.
- **Plan for conflict.** In the stress-filled environment of camp people will not always be at their best. Have a plan in place to address inter-team conflict and a plan for confronting those who may be pulling in a negative direction.
- **Share yourself.** Make sure staff have an opportunity to see and hear about what is important to you (without making yourself the centre). Community requires that we know each other and your openness can model a willingness to honestly connect and trust.
- **Laugh.** Silliness, laughter and shared joy gives a group something to bond around and helps that sense of community to grow. Find reasons to surprise and delight your staff team in unexpected ways.
- **Create traditions.** Traditions bring stability, meaning, and belonging in their familiarity through repetition. What are the rituals, beliefs, or stories you want your staff to remember and pass on? Phrases or sayings like “it’s good to be us”, or a story you all share and repeat every year help build a sense of team.
- **Celebrate.** Stopping to acknowledge, notice, and savour the good things in life motivates, encourages and builds resilience. Take time to celebrate your team throughout the summer and at the end.



**CREATING A POSITIVE
STAFF CULTURE**



RESOURCES

- **Lifeteams Conversation Stems.** Stems are the beginnings of sentences and help get conversations going.
- **Teambuilding Connection Games.** Great list of activities to build connection between staff.
- **Teambuilding Gratitude Activities.** Ideas for celebrating and building gratitude together.