



REMEMBER

- Community is actually a by-product of pulling together in the same direction. Think in advance what directions you will invite your campers to reach toward together.
- Differences in perspective, interests, gifts and styles of relating can easily act as barriers unless we intentionally find places we can stand together. Creating experiences to share and recognizing ways we are the same need to be intentional.
- Praying and worshipping together have a way of drawing others in; invite teens to encounter God and truth together and He will help bond them.



RECOGNIZE

- When campers to have the opportunity to be heard and known by others, know others more deeply, and ultimately discover more about God, it creates community. Cabin times can be a great space to build a smaller community within the camp setting.
- A community is made up of individuals. Campers need to know they are valued as individuals before they will feel safe enough to connect as a unit.
- Creating a space where everyone belongs involves recognizing the contribution that each of your campers could make because of who they are. God sees each one as "His masterpiece" (Eph. 2:10). As we invite them to contribute and affirm what they bring, a sense of belonging together will grow.
- Everyone is different; there's no one right way to connect with people. Sometimes we don't recognize that behaviour we see is actually an attempt to be known or to hide from being known. Try to find this in each of your campers.



RESPOND

- **Be intentional.** Relationships take unstructured time and space to form. Create spaces where you can "hang out" together without an agenda or activity planned and see what comes of it.
- **Build an "Us".** Look for things that might provide bridges between your campers and build new memory and experience bridges that your group can share. Refer back to those shared things and use them to form a unique identity together. Sometimes even adding a name (i.e. "we are hilarious") to that identity and repeating it often creates a sense of "us".

- **Share yourself.** Make sure campers get to know a bit about you too - the things you like and don't like, the hopes you have for the future. Community requires that we know each other and introducing them to you demonstrates enthusiasm to connect and trust. A game like 'Never Have I Ever' is a great opportunity to see what is the same about you!
- **Laugh.** Silliness, laughter and shared jokes give a group something to bond around and begin to help that community sense grow. Be very careful to protect every camper, never letting the humour be at the expense of one of your campers.
- **Share power.** Give campers a say in how they want their cabin life to be. At the beginning of the week, ask what will make their week together best for them, and then help them show respect to cabin mates by honouring those wishes.
- **Address conflict.** When frustrations surface, help campers understand no one is out to get them. People have differences, but they can still be friends. Work together to solve the problem, helping campers see that it's us against this frustration, not you against me.



RESOURCES

- **Conversation Stems:** Stems are the beginnings of sentences and help get conversations going: www.lifeteams.ca/stems
- **Never Have I Ever:** www.healthyhappyimpactful.com/never-have-ever-questions-kids/
- **Games to build community:** 2 Truths & A Lie (<https://www.thoughtco.com/2-truths-lie-idea-list-1-31144>)
- **Telephone Pictionary:** <https://www.brightful.me/blog/how-to-play-telephone-pictionary/>



CREATING COMMUNITY
IN A CABIN GROUP