

# ***PRIORITIES for CAMPING***



## **1. To increase SELF-ESTEEM**

- a) Help children develop verbal and non-verbal assertiveness skills.
- b) Encourage children's ownership of, and responsibility for, their bodies.  
Respect their privacy.  
Help them develop boundaries about touch, physical affection, space and nudity: yet encourage good touching.
- c) Validate children's feelings.  
Listen.  
Answer their questions about nightmares, television programs, real-life tragedies, and "what ifs" positively and creatively without ridiculing the child's feelings or denying reality.
- d) Discuss and honor children's rights and responsibilities.
- e) Respect the children's capability, ability to handle difficult (but not impossible) situations.  
Emphasize stories in which a child successfully dealt with a situation.  
Encourage children to tell you stories.  
Discuss and role-play, etc scriptures that lift self-esteem or the importance of children or the "little" people.

## **2. To clarify VALUES and guidelines**

- a) Include touching safety guidelines when you talk about other types of safety.  
"If you are touched by someone in a way that you don't feel right about, tell me or \_\_\_\_\_ about it. We will believe you and help."  
"Trust your inner-voice (instincts, judgment) if it's telling you something doesn't seem right."
- b) Teach children that safety guidelines apply all the time.
- c) Emphasize the worth of others, the sojourner, etc. instead of perpetuating the myth of the "dangerous stranger."  
Teach children to judge behavior, rather than whole persons.
- d) Remind children that adults are not always right.

## **3. To develop DECISION-MAKING SKILLS**

- a) Allow for as much free choice as possible and appropriate in the schedule, meals, etc.
- b) Emphasize stories in which people made difficult decisions, especially if they figured out a trick and/or trusted their instincts or feelings.
- c) Discuss the differences between:  
"OK" and "not OK" secrets (i.e. it's not OK to keep secrets about touching)  
tattling and asking for help  
good, bad, and confusing touches

## **4. To create a supportive (helping) COMMUNITY**

- a) Model a Christian community of listening, caring, and healing.
- b) Encourage children to ask for help if they need it.