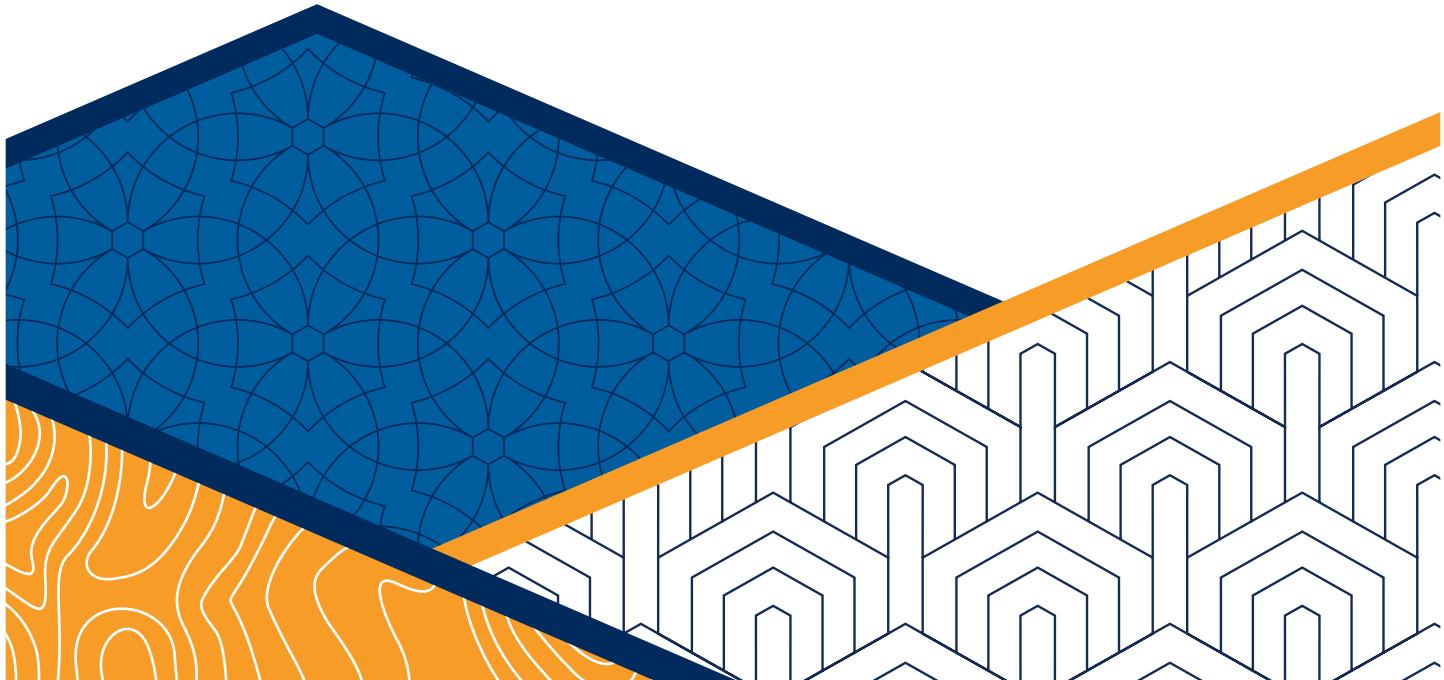


RESOURCE



BUILDING BRIDGES: TRANSFERRING CAMPERS' NEW SKILLS TO HOME AND CHURCH

Engaging the new skills learned at camp in the home and at church.





When your camper comes home, especially if they are in high school and have been at camp for more than two weeks, they likely have changed for the better and may have developed and applied new leadership skills at camp. As they come home, it is important that we receive them and their new skills as a gift to our families and communities. If you have a camper that led worship, facilitated a bible study, or grew in their social skills while at camp, these simple steps will help you set up a fertile environment for their continued growth:

ASK. While you want to avoid drilling them on the car ride home, begin to ask them about their experience, especially the new things that they did and the skills they developed. If you've seen those skills used at home already, name and affirm them. Begin to provide opportunities for them to use their new skills at home.

Example: If they prayed for meals at camp, invite them to do so at home.

CONNECT. If you are part of a church, make sure you and/or your camper connect with church staff. Encourage the staff members to invite your campers to be involved in ways similar to the ways they led at camp.

Example: If they were part of dish crew, housekeeping, or grounds crew at camp, can they volunteer at church or in a local ministry in a similar capacity. If they led worship, ask about opportunities for them to lead during a service.

RELEASE. Try and find something meaningful and significant that you can release your camper into where they can use and continue to build their skill set.

Example: If they enjoyed leading bible studies for younger campers, let them design a bible lesson for a Sunday school class or family devotional time.

AFFIRM. As you see them use new skills, affirm and encourage them.

Example: Celebrate their growth with small momentos (a study bible or journal, for example) and with public affirmation (have pastors name and thank campers that lead worship).

Ultimately, the goal is not just to celebrate the skills your camper brought home, but to help them integrate those gifts into their daily life and faith journey. By consistently using the steps of Asking, Connecting, Releasing, and Affirming, you create a bridge between the powerful environment of camp and the supportive communities of home and church.

Receiving these new skills as a valuable gift ensures that the growth experienced at camp becomes a permanent foundation, enabling your camper to continue blossoming into a confident, capable, and contributing member of your family, church, and broader community.



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