

CONFERENCE NOTES

Notes from the presentation by Scott Arizala



Consultant, Trainer, & Author

We Squashed It! Problem Solving & Conflict Management

Big ideas to remember

- Selective Negative Focus
- This is how they learn
- How you *feel* about it won't help
- Let them be right about what they need to be right about

Getting what we want =
knowing what to look for

What am I looking for? (good behavior)

Choices, Responsibility & Replacement

The way you say it...

These are the three principles to remember when trying to inspire and engender kids' control over themselves and their behavior.

Choices = power & control

Give them enough to make a thoughtful choice, but not enough to stress-out (balance)

Responsibility = ownership

Insist that they take ownership of good and bad choices.

Replacement = development (better choices/ goals)

Try to see all behaviors in pairs. If there is something going on that is not ok, what would be a better choice.

What am I looking for?

A technique for helping kids make great choices

Teach your staff and counselor to always ask themselves that essential question whenever they are with kids, "What am I looking for?" The answers that they need to come up with are the life skills, values, characters, etc. that are important and integral to your camp. Caring, respect, compassion, leadership, good communication, honesty, integrity, responsibility, or anything else that is important to you. The trick is to do something with the answer when they see it in the camper.

Praise

Teach counselors how to specifically praise the behavior they want to see.

Practice

Teach counselors how to practice not only seeing the behavior, but actively setting up opportunities for kids to practice each skill (just like having patience at Archery or persistence at the climbing wall)

Present

Teach counselors how to present or teach a skill when they see the opposite. Instead of just telling a kid to stop name calling (disrespectful), we should be talking to them about how to be respectful.

This may be the best way to actually deliver the promise we make to parents about what we are going to do for their kids.

Asking Questions

Asking questions gets kids thinking critically and trying to give voice to their ideas or put words to it. An excellent example of this is when we are talking with kids about rules and expectations. Most adults just explain or state the rules. The reality is that most kids already know most of the rules. So ask them. Tap into the knowledge they have. It's simple, ask questions about what everyone should be doing, what everyone should remember (or the rules), and why. This will give them ample opportunity to express themselves in a knowledgeable and successful way. Then they may be more confident expressing how they feel, and you may be more apt to listen!

The best Camp Counselors know that if they added up everything they said to a camper, that the questions should outweigh the statements.

Problem solving & conflict management

You have to ACT every time...

Ask questions

Choices

Try one out

Ask Questions

- Intelligent fact finding – what really went down? Ask a lot of questions
 - Symptom or problem – example: yelling in front of campers
 - Remember – Just because X told you FIRST may only mean they got to you FIRST
 - What's really going on here? Why are they having this issue? What skill set is underdeveloped?
 - Executive functioning – making thoughtful decisions
 - Language skills – labeling emotions
 - Cognitive style – realistic appraisal of situations
 - Social skills – making friends / empathy
 - Emotion regulation – appropriate expression
 - What are the needs of the other person or people? What did they want out of this?

What Choices do they have?

- Defining choices – what can THEY do about it?
 - Teach to the limitation described above – what couldn't they do that they should of done?
 - What can they do to involve the other person or people?
 - How could this problem be solved together?

Try one of the choices

- Did it work?
 - If not, are there other choices that may work?
 - Go back to asking questions – maybe the problem isn't clear

Ideas from Collaborative Problem Solving

Ask questions – don't ask questions you think you already know the answer to, or be willing to accept a novel response

- When working through a problem ask, *"What do you need?"* and *"What do you want?"*
- What's the underdeveloped skill?
 - Decision making, hypothetical thinking, self-expression, emotion regulation, social interaction, and/or social understanding

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