

# ADULT LEADER

AZNYI TRAINING HANDBOOK



## AZNYI

ARIZONA NAZARENE YOUTH INTERNATIONAL

# CAMP COUNSELOR



# ADULT LEADERS IMPORTANT

**S**tudents have big needs. At camp there are kids who do not have relationships with Christ and kids whose relationships with Christ need to be restored. At camp there are students who have been abused physically, emotionally, sexually, and ritually; students who have thought about or attempted suicide; students who struggle with addictions; students who feel lonely, depressed and/or angry.

Combine the dynamic teaching of God's Word with energetic praise and worship and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, and these needs are going to surface! What better place for God to reach into and expose the deepest needs of students than at a camp such as this, where the student is surrounded by the support and encouragement of Christian peers and caring adults who are willing to love them and help them.



## How Do We Help?

During your one-on-one time with students, you will have the opportunity to help them by:

**Accepting:** Take the students seriously; show compassion that is unconditional.

**Reassuring:** Students can lose their perspective. They are sure the feelings they have will never leave. By listening to them and reassuring them they are not alone and that others have walked the same path and have survived, we give students assurance that things are going to be OK. Hope energizes and renews (Hebrews 12:1-3).

**Listening:** Give total attention. Students need the freedom to talk about the experiences they have had and feel understood.

**Focusing:** It is not unusual for the student to have difficulty pinpointing the primary cause of his/her present problem. Help discern the spiritual need.

**Planning:** We are here to help, not to solve the problems for the students. Help the student see the light at the end of the tunnel by praying, sharing Scripture, offering suggestions and providing referrals (primarily the local church and youth pastor).

If you find yourself counseling someone you are not prepared to counsel, do not hesitate to refer the student to another counselor.



# INTRODUCTION

## OK, BUT I'M A ROOKIE. CAN I COUNSEL EFFECTIVELY EVEN IF I HAVE NEVER COUNSELED BEFORE?

YES! The student who responds to the invitation will have come forward freely. Most will feel the need to make some kind of change in their lives. Don't be afraid of them. They have allowed themselves to become vulnerable. We owe them the chance to pour out their hearts without condemnation. We owe them love and acceptance, regardless of the secrets they may share. **WE MUST RESIST THE DESIRE TO LECTURE.** Instead, we must discipline ourselves to be patient, responsive in listening and earn the right to speak. Our goal is to challenge them to make a decision that puts Christ first!

### How to Listen Effectively

1. Your attitude is the first point to consider. With the proper attitude, you will be able to show the students you accept them as they are and they don't have to measure up to any standard before you will listen to them.
2. Be attentive. Listen for the words that aren't spoken.
3. Try not to let your mind wander. It is easy to get lost in your own reactions to what the student is saying. It takes discipline to keep your attention focused on the student.
4. Listen for feelings. While the student is talking, notice not only what they are saying, but also the feelings they express.
5. Assume nothing about the student. Don't assume they know anything about the Bible, or they think any kind of behavior is right or wrong, or their feelings are different from yours, etc.
6. Don't jump in too quickly to fill pauses in the conversation. The student may be doing some serious thinking about how he/she wants to phrase what they have to say.

# STEP BY STEP

## Counseling Procedure

### Before The Service...

1. Pray for yourself and for the students you will counsel.
2. Be ready to counsel (mentally, emotionally,
3. Bring your Bible to every service.

### After you are matched with a student...

1. Introduce yourself right away.
2. Ask the student's name - use it in conversation.
3. Don't be afraid to be physical. Touching the student lightly on the shoulder helps to communicate your concern and acceptance.
4. Demonstrate you are ready to listen. Face the student.

### Transition to Commitment...

After listening to the students needs and problems, help them move toward making a commitment.

#### *Suggested transition question:*

"Do you think God is asking you to change something in your life? If so, what?"

After the student has answered the transition question, you are ready to challenge them to make a commitment.

#### *Suggested commitment question:*

What kind of decision is God leading you to make tonight?

This question is very important. It allows you to take control of the conversation in an effort to lead your student to a spiritual commitment. The question is likely to be answered with students indicating a need to make a behavioral change. Your response is to point out that lasting behavioral changes are only possible through spiritual change.

If the student is NOT a Christian or if you are unsure:

Present the Gospel using the picture of Christ, Revelations 3:20 and John 3:16. \* Pray a prayer of commitment with them. You should word this prayer with the student repeating it. Include a confession of sin, acceptance of Christ as Savior and proposed change of behavior.

Pray for the student out loud when you are done, asking for God's strength and God's protection in their life, and allow them to continue in prayer.

If the student is a Christian, word your prayer to include:

Confession, thanksgiving for God's forgiveness, and specific behavior changes that God can help him accomplish

When you are finished, send the student back to their seat, and get ready to counsel again!

A student needs Special Counseling if he/she:

Seems to be out of control emotionally, or talk about doing harm to themselves or others.

Speaks of physical or sexual abuse that you believe has never been reported.

What you need to do:

1. Take your student and find a pastor or youth pastor who can help in these specific areas.
2. Stay with your student until the pastor/ youth pastor releases you.
3. Anything communicated that speaks of abuse, of any type or harm to himself or herself or someone else, **MUST** be reported to the camp director and will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

A crisis can be:

Real: an event that actually happened (abuse)

Anticipated: Loved one about to die, possible pregnancy

## The ABC'S of Special Counseling

Achieve a relationship with the person:

- Instill confidence by demonstrating a strong positive voice and attitude
- Be in control yourself
- Listen! Listen! Listen!
- Encourage expression of feelings
- Be empathetic, not sympathetic
- Be a friend 7. Begin where they are
- Accept the person as they are (not necessarily the behavior)

Break down the problem:

- Look for the major issues/ theme
- Look for those parts about which something can be done.
- See what's been tried already

# WHAT IS SPECIAL COUNSELING?

- Look at new alternatives
- Look at potential consequences of actions
- Work toward student's ownership of the problem

Commitment to action:

- Encourage the formulation of the plan
- Set time limits to initiate the plan
- Tell the student you will follow up (if possible to make that commitment)
- Be firm and supportive in working out resistance
- Know when you are in over your head
- Refer student to his/her pastor or youth pastor for follow up on specialized help or counseling following the week of camp

Document Everything:

- Identifying information
- What you did

## \* A VERY IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY \*

*Please DO NOT promise a student that you will not share what they tell you with anyone. We are legally and ethically required to report certain things. Anytime a student presents danger to himself or someone else, you cannot maintain confidentiality. Assure the student you will do what is best for him/her.*

# HOW TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC CRISIS SITUATIONS

## Depression (signs and symptoms)

- Loss of interest or pleasure in most activities
- Sleep or appetite disturbance (increase/decrease)
- Negative thinking
- Not feeling understood
- Feelings of wanting to leave home
- Aggressive behavior
- Use of alcohol or illicit drugs
- Statements of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Recurrent thoughts of death
- Withdrawn, isolating, fatigue

## Responding to Depression

- Be non-judgmental, but concerned
- Assess severity
- How long has the person been feeling this way?
- Ask if they have thoughts of harming themselves
- Ask about current circumstances
- Ask if student is using drugs or medication
- Depending on cause and severity, consider referring to a professional counselor if there is high risk of harming self or others

## Drug and Alcohol Abuse (signs and symptoms)

- Withdrawal
- Changing relationships
- Secretive
- Difficulty in school
- Resistance to authority
- Behavior problems - shoplifting, stealing, unexplained spending
- Physical complaints - colds, flu, headaches, blood-shot eyes

- Change in eating habits

## Responding to Drug and Alcohol Abuse

- Let student know you care
- Detail the problem
- Detail the severity of the problem and your concern
- Suggest steps to recovery (counseling, recovery center, etc.)

## Physical Abuse (signs and symptoms)

- Bruises, scratches or cuts
- Suspicious explanations of "accidents"
- Untreated medical problems
- Running away from home
- Fear of parents or adults in general
- Difficulty in relating to adults
- Aggressive behavior (acting out)

## Responding to Physical Abuse

- Inform a pastor or youth pastor immediately for reporting purposes
- The abuse victim needs:
  - A caring relationship with an adult
  - A positive friendship with peers
  - Reinforcement of self-worth
  - Communication of God's unconditional love
- Do not let the student leave without notifying their youth pastor and arranging for a safe place.



### Sexual Abuse (signs and symptoms)

- Physical disturbances including sleep disturbances
  - Emotional disturbances: guilt, withdrawal, inability to trust, delinquent activities, involvement with drugs or alcohol
- Responding to Sexual Abuse:
- Recognize the presence of both guilt and fear. The student will need reassurance they are not the guilty party
  - Ask specific questions about the nature of the abuse - who, when, where, how often, etc.
  - Inform a pastor or youth pastor immediately for reporting purposes

### Responding to a Sexually Abused Student

- Communicate that God loves them unconditionally
- Let them know that the sexual abuse was not their fault
- Ask the student if they would mind if you invited their youth pastor/ leader to join you in this conversation/ prayer time
- Let them know that we are going to do everything we can to ensure their safety
- We are ethically and legally mandated to report suspicions of child sexual abuse to authorities. So contact the Event Director and Do not let the student leave without notifying their youth pastor and arranging for a safe place.

### Suicide (signs and symptoms)

- Low self-esteem
- Depression and withdrawal
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Feeling of guilt/ worthlessness
- Talk of death
- Life crisis including death of a loved one, divorce, or break-up
- Self-destructive behavior
- Making plans and preparing to die (suicide notes, giving away possessions)

### Responding to a Suicidal Student

We suggest the acronym C.H.A.D.

- Confirm specific detail
- How do you plan to hurt yourself?
- Assess the danger - how serious is the student?

- Document and report if you believe the student presents a danger to himself/herself.

### When To Refer / Warning Signals

#### 1. Self-destructive behavior:

- Inappropriate use of alcohol/drugs
- Suicidal or homicidal thinking
- Poor impulse control or judgment
- Compulsive preoccupations (food, weight, exercise, sex)

#### 2. Problems with mood:

- Continual depression
- Euphoric moods that disrupt normal functioning
- Sleeping difficulties

#### 3. Distorted thinking:

- Easily confused
- Increased difficulties with memory of recent events
- Irrational fears or logic
- Hearing disturbing inner voices

#### 4. Problems with relationships:

- Violent outburst toward others
- Isolation and alienation from others
- Absence or collapse of support system



# HOW SHOULD I ACT THIS WEEK

The students you will be surrounded by this week will all come with different backgrounds. Some you may be familiar with, but there will be many you are not familiar with. Our goal as counselors is to avoid inappropriate behavior at all times, and to promote a healthy relationship with the youth. These are some guidelines:

## Cabin and Restroom

- When changing clothes, change in an area without students
- When showering, use the counselor showers avoiding any nudity in front of students
- Allow students privacy when they are changing clothes or showering
- Be sure to be in your room at "lights out", and have all students accounted for.
- Encourage quietness from the kids but allow for time to talk with your students. Find out what the Lord has done in their lives during the day
- Avoid the temptation to gather with other counselors, stay in cabin with your students.

## Altar Time

- Only respond to students of the same gender: Minimize physical touch (Remember we do not know the student's background) Placing your hand on their shoulder or upper back may be the most unthreatening and appropriate touch. Allow room for personal space. We want the student to feel comfortable and not be a distraction to what the Lord is trying to do at that moment.
- If you don't know the student, be sure to give him/her your name.
- If you don't know the student, be sure to find out his/her name - and use it while talking with her/him.
- Remember to find out why the student is at the altar, and take time to counsel and pray with him/her.
- Allow for an anointed guidance, and pray for what the Lord will have you say.

## Meal Time

- Use meal time to just hang out with students; make a point to find your cabin and eat with them
- Be aware of students who are alone, and invite them to your table

## Team Activities

- Be sure to get involved in the team activities.
- Be sure all of your students are accounted for
- Encourage excellence in sportsmanship and effort.
- Work together with all other counselors on your team to assist the activity leaders by communicating the game to your group, by quieting your group during instructions, and being available to assist in the game

## Family Time

- Allow time to discuss what the Lord has done that day
- Be sure to notify the Camp Directors if you take your students off campus
- If you leave campus, be sure to return by "lights out"
- When you dismiss from family time, instruct students to go right to snack time and not bother other groups that are meeting.

## Attire

Note: Dress modestly. Remember we are working with teenage students, and we do not want to be a stumbling block to them. It is our goal to set an example in this area.

- All counselors should wear non-revealing clothing
- Male counselors should avoid being without a shirt.
- Female counselors should avoid short shorts/skirts; revealing tops or tops that bare midriff

## Relationships Within the Staff

- Disagreements between adult leaders on critical issues should never be discussed in front of the students.
- Boy/Girl-friend relationships should keep physical affection to a bare minimum if any at all. We are not here to enhance these relationships, and we must set an example of appropriateness.

## In Speech

- Avoid Gossip, deceit, and critical speech.
- Keep a positive tone with students and encourage them to fully enjoy camp.
- The counselors are here to work together, under the leadership of the Camp Directors, to promote life-changing opportunities for these students!

# Conclusion

We hope that this manual has helped you and that it continues to help you as you participate in this vital role. We know that this sacrifice of ministry will produce Kingdom residuals. Find time to connected deeply with the One who wants to flow through you. Allow Him to fill you with the resource of Heaven as you continually pour out His grace.

Remember this words from Oswald Chambers:

“When once we get intimate with Jesus we are never lonely, we never need sympathy, we can pour out all the time without being pathetic. The saint who is intimate with Jesus will never leave impressions of their-self, but only the impression that Jesus is having unhindered way, because the last abyss of their nature has been satisfied by Jesus. The only impression left by such a life is that of the strong calm sanity that Our Lord gives to those who are intimate with Him.”

Thanks for your valuable ministry. We know that this camp could not happen without you.

Sincerely,

Pastor Trevor

*If you have any question feel free to call:  
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TIME TO GET STARTED





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