



If a Campus Kid could tell us....

(Tips on how to "be" around Campus groups)

Here's a little insight into the mind of a Campus kid, well any kid in general really. It's not for memorising or anything like that. It's just there to help you see things from their eyes - a very different perspective sometimes. Reminding yourself to stop, step back from the build up to a situation and think about how the kid sees it, and different solutions in line with this (rather than just reacting), is a tough thing to do. But it makes a massive difference!

From their eyes - Talking with kids:

- ☺ If you try to show everyone you are "bigger than me" by "putting me down", I will argue back or even deliberately misbehave as I do not want to lose face in front of others - my image is very important to me.
- ☺ When you correct me or put me down in front of others it doesn't work. Inside, I'm angry at you and I say all kinds of things that will show in my behaviour. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me away from others.
- ☺ If you need to talk to me about negative behaviour, it helps me if you can remind me I do positive things sometimes too and it's only some things, not everything, that needs to change. Otherwise it is too overwhelming and I will not understand.
- ☺ When you go on about my mistakes, especially in front of others, I feel rotten, like I'm really no good. Sometimes I would like to learn to make mistakes without feeling I am no good. It's hard to build on failure.
- ☺ When I'm in conflict with others (or you) and you try to get me to apologise, or ask me 'Why?' you'll see I'm not very cooperative - it will look like I'm not listening. I don't mind you taking action but can you find a way to 'turn the heat down' and provide a face-saving way out of it? After all, your social skills are better than mine!
- ☺ Sometimes I listen more when you speak quietly than when you shout. If you're quiet I have to be quiet to hear you. If you're loud sometimes I might try and be louder to provoke an even bigger reaction.

From their eyes - Respecting kids:

- ☺ When you apologise, you show me that you, too, are human, that it's not beneath your dignity to say 'I'm sorry'. Your honesty helps me feel warm towards you; it also reminds me that to be human is to be fallible. I can live up to that.

☺ Sometimes I meet adults who are frightened to be wrong or not to always know the answer. They try to exert their authority by "talking big" but I can see through it and I don't respect them. I need to trust you to respect you and if you're always up front and honest with me then I will listen to what you say.

☺ I need you to help keep me safe but I also need you to remember that I'm often quite used to looking after myself, particularly as I get older, and I can feel "smothered" if you're always checking up on me. I've survived this far in life and a bit of trust and freedom from you wins a lot of trust and respect from me.

☺ If you make sure that each and every day you say at least one positive thing to me or my group every half an hour then I will feel good about being with you, feel good about Campus, feel secure about being part of a "good" group and enjoy myself more. I will behave "better".

☺ Just like anyone else in the world, I will respond much better if you compromise with me about disagreements rather than always insisting on doing things your way because you're older. If we do things my way and they don't work at least I will see that, feel that you trusted me and understand why you wanted to do things differently.

From their eyes - Preventing problems:

☺ When I'm tired or hungry or uncertain I become short tempered and "snap" easily. So do you. If we all get enough sleep, eat at the right times and are clear about what's happening we all get on much better.

☺ Often people say I get into "trouble" when I'm bored. Usually I'm not doing anything that is wrong or bad or evil. I'm just following a whim and acting on my feelings. It's only called "trouble" because it doesn't fit into your plan of what I should be doing. Sometimes I do need to be told to follow the plan but there are times where you could think more flexibly about whether what I'm doing is really that "bad" and whether there are ways to compromise on the plan and still make things okay for everyone.

☺ When I come on Campus, I come to an area, a building, a group and a set of people that are often unfamiliar to me. Sometimes I get worried about people I left at home. Other times I try to make myself feel more secure by trying to be the biggest kid in the group. I try to put myself in charge so that I have some control over my situation. I absolutely do not want to lose face. Ever. If you give me a bit of control/responsibility for something positive then I will feel more important and I won't try and take control back in more negative ways.

☺ Just like you, I do not like it when I feel out of control of a situation. I need you to share bits of control with me like letting me help set my group rules or giggle quietly in my room with my friends after lights out so long as I'm not

disturbing other groups. If you try to be 100% in control all the time you're almost making me push boundaries to get some authority back.

☺ I learn much faster if you always do what you say you're going to do. If you threaten a punishment and don't carry it through, I just won't believe you the next time you warn me.

☺ Remember that distraction to prevent things happening works so much better than trying to sort them out once they have happened!

From their eyes - Boundaries & Discipline:

☺ You're more effective, you know, when you stay calm. Any situation has a certain amount of stress /tension in it. When you don't stay calm all you're doing is adding your stress to the pot which will overflow. Take stress out of the situation - don't put it in...

☺ When I don't get a chance to tell my side of the story, when you try to force or frighten me into telling the truth, I often tell lies, or like you, 'bend' the truth.

☺ When you demand reasons- you know, full explanations for my behaviour - I often don't really know *why* I did it. If you ask *what* I did and suggest alternatives, that might be better.

☺ When you preach to me (or, more often, at me) you forget that I already know what's right and wrong. If you nag at me I might appear deaf (this is a way of protecting myself. If we have clear rules, expectations and consequences of behaviour, preaching won't change me.

☺ When you're firm with me, I don't really mind. At least I know where I stand. All I ask is that you do it without making me feel stupid, hopeless and worthless. When you're inconsistent I just get confused. I even try to get away with anything I can. When your expectations are clear and your treatment fair and calm I know where I stand.

LASTLY - BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY:

Underneath I'm just a kid on holiday wanting to have fun...

...if you remember that, you won't go far wrong!!!

☺ ☺ ☺ And remember - smiles are more often returned than not! ☺ ☺ ☺

Top Tips for a Happy Bedtime

Bedtimes can be one of the most difficult bits of the day. It's really important that everyone gets a good night of sleep. Not being too tired means that the kids are much more likely to enjoy themselves and are loads less inclined to snap or start on one another. Just think how tetchy *you* get with no sleep; well it's exactly the same for them. It's worth noting that these pointers won't all be relevant or useful all of the time and you'll need to pick and choose as you need them.

Planning in Advance - Throughout the Day

- Be really firm with bedtime on the first night
- Remove all food from the room.
 - Take away food brought from home and don't let them hoard tuck
- Reduce sugar towards the afternoon and evening
 - Try to get them to eat any tuck at lunchtimes and avoid vending machines like the plague in the afternoon and evening.
- Play lots of energetic games
 - Games like tic, football, races, first to...etc work wonders for tiring kids out so that they go to sleep later. Include lots of these in afternoon and evening.
- Don't let your kids sleep on the bus*
 - Keep them awake with loud music, games, singing etc. Drivers might like to say that they have a 'no sleeping on my bus' rule to help with this.

Planning in Advance - The Run Up to Bedtime

- Create a sleepy atmosphere on the way home
 - *This is the exception to the above. On the way back from evening activities avoid singing and loud music. Keep the windows shut, the heating on full blast and radio 3 softly playing in the background.
- Take the long way home
 - If your kids are still hyped up when you're coming back at night then making a detour/going the long way can help calm them before bed.

Bedtime Itself

- Have a mental checklist
 - There are several things kids need to do before bed. These include:
 - Putting on pyjamas
 - Cleaning teeth
 - Going to the toilet
 - Ensure that *all* your kids have done all of these before getting them into bed. That way you won't have them yo-yoing up and down for various things.
- Hot chocolate
 - Only give this when they are all in bed. On returning with the tray, put it down outside and go back in to check this is still the case before handing out.

Tips for hot chocolate

- Half a small cup will do
 - Add a little bit of cold milk to each cup once poured
 - Count your marshmallows - only bring up 2 each and no more
- Bedtime stories
See additional sheet for ideas.
- Use a quiet, unexcited voice.
 - Keep talking until they're all asleep if you can
 - Tailor the story so it suits the interest level/age of the group
 - Build in relaxation exercises, thinking moments and pauses
 - Use loads of description and detail
 - Tell them in the dark. And take a torch up with you
 - Stop if they start talking. Only continue when it's quiet.
- Sneak out but stay close
Once you think all of your kids are asleep. Quietly sneak out of the room. Sit outside the door for ten minutes just to make sure they've all dozed off.

Top Tips

- Avoid crowding
Don't let kids push their beds/mats together into one heap or big bed. It's much harder for them to sleep when they are all piled together.
- Sneaking upstairs
Suggesting you try and get upstairs and to bed without the co-ordinators knowing can be a fun game and a cunning plan to get them to be quiet.
Text the coordinators to let them know so they can stay out of your way.
- Use quiet games and activities
- Set an alarm
If kids want to stay up 10 more minutes etc , set your phone alarm for that time and make it clear to everyone that when the alarm goes off it's time for lights off. Sometimes you can appoint a kid as 'timekeeper'
- Sit between kids that are talking
- Remove all clocks and offer to look after watches
This means you can successfully make out that it's later than it actually is.
- Use campus points
For kids that stay quiet, first one asleep, if they're all asleep by on time etc
- Get a coordinator to put disruptive kids in the quiet room

If you have any more ideas or gems of wisdom on bedtimes
just let us know.....

Sleep tight.....Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz