







Tips on Counseling Children

by Keith Elder, Director
Glacier Bible Camp, Hungry Horse, Montana


 Don't pry. Win the right to be heard. Be a good listener.


 Be careful not to try to solve your child's problem for him. Guide him into the Word of God, where the Holy Spirit can speak to him and where he can find right principles for making right choices. Your children cannot take you home to solve their problems. But they can take Christ who has promised never to leave or forsake His own (Hebrews 13:5).


 Not all problems have a spiritual origin, but the child will not find a permanent solution to his problem until he is in proper relation to Jesus Christ. Lead him to the point where the Holy Spirit can affect an inner change in his life.


 A wise children's leader will try to find out why a child acts the way he does (particularly a problem child). Rather than automatically disci-


plining or treating a manifestation of behavior, seek its cause.

 Be shockproof. He may try to shock you with real or fanciful stories to see if you condemn him as a person. Disagree with what he has done, but don't reject him. Accept him as a person; reject his sin.

 Keep confidences. What is told in confidence is a God-given responsibility.

 Be honest! Youth spot a phony more quickly than anyone else.

 Be available and approachable at all times.

 By faith commit your children to the Lord. Trust Him to work in their lives, to give insight, motivation, and change. You might make a child conform, but only the Holy Spirit brings about the needed inner change, so trust Him to work through you.

Guidelines for Developing Rapport

by Doug Marks

Developing good rapport with a child will build a foundation for a lasting relationship with him. Listed below are some helpful guidelines to assist the children's leader in this process.

Find out the child's name.

- Do this upon first contact. Don't wait until later.
- Use names when addressing the children.

Be yourself when communicating.

- Don't be anything you aren't—children can identify a phony more quickly than anyone.

Be positive in attitude and action.

- Compliment the children on dress, personal grooming, and positive points you view in their lives.
- Be truthful and searching in these areas.

Be a listener, not a lecturer.

- Most children are dying to express themselves, but they will never do that without first trusting you.
- They will never trust you unless they believe you care and have proved it by listening to them.

Ask of God.

- If any person lacks wisdom let him ask of God. God answers prayer.

Be a Christ-like model!

Building rapport with your children and gaining their confidence is of primary importance. You have the opportunity to affect their lives for eternity. They desire someone they can look to as an example of Christian love and understanding.

Questions For Further Study—

1. What does every child need before he can find permanent solutions to his problems?
2. In what source can children find good principles for making right choices?
3. How can you show acceptance of a child while rejecting his sin?