

Talking with Your Camper about a Summer Without Overnight Camp

Every camper will respond differently to the news that there will not be overnight camp this summer. As you discern how to allow each one to process this unwanted news, perhaps these ideas will help. We are praying for you as you have these hard conversations. We are praying for our campers – *they are still our campers* – as God moves in their hearts and minds – *because God is still at work*.

- **Pray.** Ask the Lord to give you sensitivity, openness and patience. Ask the Lord to help you set aside your own anxieties about COVID-19 and all the changes it has brought to you, your family and your life, as you listen to your child.
- **Create space for emotions.** Crying, anger, disappointment, frustration, sullenness – all these and more are typical responses to unwanted change. Allowing space for children to express them is part of the grieving process.
- **Validate emotions and direct healing expression.** Tell your child it is okay to feel sad, angry, confused or frustrated. Tell your child you share those feelings – and many adults do, too. And tell your child that expressing feelings appropriately helps our healing. There are many ways you can help your child express or navigate his or her feelings in healthy ways. Some ideas include:
 - Prayer – Tell God about your pain
 - Read Scripture – Read stories of people who suffered
 - Journal – Put your heart feelings on paper
 - Art – Express your feelings creatively
 - Music – Listen or create your own
 - Activity – Take a walk, exercise together, play outside together
 - Conversation – Keep talking
- Share the facts and be open to questions. You can find FAQs, videos from our staff and information about why this decision was made at www.cpbcc.com/summer-2020-programs-cancelled. You can call us with questions. You can assure your child that we are planning in faith for summer 2021!
- **Prepare for cycles.** As in any grief process, feelings will go up and down. Let your child know this is okay and normal. If your child has access to social media, encourage him or her to engage with us there. If your child is in a youth group, encourage participation. Continue to check in emotionally with your child.