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Resources for Coping

Helping you navigate this disappointment and support for your child(ren) and yourself through this difficult time

The news about camp not opening in Summer 2020 was inconceivable when you enrolled as a family or were hired as a staff member. Even three months ago, we recognized the evolving updates about the Covid-19 pandemic were serious, but none of us anticipated this outcome.

Now, all of us, on some level, are feeling this loss whether internally or outwardly. Typically, the intensity of our feelings directly correlates to the duration and strong connections we have with Camp Barney.

Below are some thoughts and tips for you to consider today and throughout this summer:

Allow the Feelings

Everyone expresses difficult news differently. Allow your child, or yourself, to have these feelings. To cry, to be angry, to be quiet. Hopefully you'll find words to express these feelings. Sometimes, we want to rush to heal or fix the hurt. However, in this time, when an unanticipated circumstance is central to the cause of this loss, we can't fix. We can, however, allow our feelings to be expressed in the ways that are most comfortable for us.

Give Space

Children, teens and adults all grieve in different ways and on different timetables. Recognize that some will experience this loss in waves. Some children may only want to talk to friends who have shared the experience of camp, and therefore, with people who "really understand". Notice when kids, or you, are struggling one day, and are ready to talk about this loss another day.

Resist the Urge

... to compare the loss of camp to greater or totally different losses. And, assuming that kids and parents, or staff members and parents, feel this loss similarly may not be true. It's best to simply listen, to validate one's unique feelings. "Resist the urge" to rescue, problem-solve, or rush to move on. It's OK to be in this moment for a bit, even if it feels painful.

Encourage Connection

Kids will naturally want to commiserate with their camp friends. Similarly, staff members will want the opportunity to seek the support of their camp friends too. This mutual support, even by Facetime or Zoom these days, can be helpful to regain normalcy during a situation in which kids or adults have little control. In time, encourage your child, or even yourself, to consider ways to support others in our camp community. This gesture will not only recognize the feelings of others, but also enables us to "connect" compassionately and with empathy.

Recognize

Children, teens and adults are resilient. With time, and support from others, the incredible experiences, memories and relationships gained from camp will be sources of strength now, and that there will be a "light at the end of the tunnel," in the future.

Consider

Eventually talking about the possibilities of camp for next summer will be healthy. Make new plans, new dreams, and think of new opportunities. We may not be able to answer "what could have been" this summer. However, looking ahead may enable that big "exhale" and allow for feelings of hope about what's to come.

And Reach Out

If you are concerned about the intensity or duration of your child's or your response to this news, please contact a mental health professional in your area.

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