



# Getting the word out about Camp Hope Day Camp...

## Promoting Camp Hope Ministries

The following methods have been the most successful for congregations hosting Camp Hope:

1. Build a Camp Hope Ministry Team. People support what they help create! The more people involved in making Camp Hope happen, the more voices that will be talking in the community about this great experience.
2. Directly mail a registration packet to every family in the congregation—even if they don't have children! Everyone has neighbors, relatives and friends. Even single people have co-workers with children. (Some congregations simply include the registration packet in their newsletter.) To make this more successful...
  - Start teaching your congregation about Camp Hope Ministries, inc. in February or March.
  - Tell them at least 7 times, 7 different ways about the values of Camp Hope Ministries.
  - Go so far as to ask church members to TALK to other people about this opportunity! This is evangelism.
  - Encourage grandparents or aunts and uncles to invite their grandchildren, nieces and nephews to visit during one or more Camp Hope Sessions!
  - Talk to the children in Sunday School about Camp Hope. Tell them to bring their friends.
  - Invite the youth staff to do the talking to 3rd grade groups and older. The "coolness factor" works!
2. Put a professional banner or sign on the front lawn of the church. This can be designed so that the dates change yearly but the main info is the same. Keep the information simple. Use large letters. To make this more successful...
  - Be sure the answering machine at the church gives information or a contact person's name regarding Camp Hope.
  - Return messages the same or next day.
  - Talk about the camp values before talking about the fees. Be sure people know if scholarship funding is available.
  - Everyone on the church staff should be able to talk about Camp Hope enough to answer basic questions. Give staff a copy of the "Everything you want to know" handout.
3. Inform the community. Use signs, ads, stories, and neighborhood contacts in schools, (especially counselors & school nurses) hospitals, day care centers (of siblings), businesses, playgrounds, local restaurants, hair salons, coffee shops, etc. Some schools will even let you put flyers in the children's weekly folder. To make this more successful...
  - Get a team of church members to take signs wherever they go!
  - Post Camp Hope Ministries info on your church web site.
  - Talk with neighborhood congregations & community centers so they know the quality of your day camp. They can refer!

## Network the Neighborhood

Congregations that are invested and known in their neighborhood have an easier time with camp enrollment. Get connected to other organizations in your neighborhood that serve children, youth and families. Pass out Camper Registration information to all the schools in your area, to other congregations of all faith traditions as well as new homeowners, apartment complexes and local businesses.

But don't stop there!

The best way to encourage people to attend Camp Hope is word of mouth and relationships.

**This means on year one, you have to work twice as hard because there is no reputation.**

Ask the teachers, nurses, school administrators and other community leaders to carry information and encourage people they meet to come.

Make sure week one at camp is excellent. Many parents will only sign up for one week until they know this is a quality operation—then they will re-up for the following weeks.

The staff can help too. Ask staff to talk to their neighbors, the parents of children they babysit for or know through sporting events. Word of mouth is always the best approach.

If you are worried about the cost of Camp Hope, revisit your budgeting values. How does Camp Hope compare to the local YMCA or other summer programs? Can you invite a donor to help subsidize the budget and reduce the tuition for the first two years as things get rolling?