



# EWALU CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

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*"In the rhythm of Christian life, Ewalu serves as a place apart to connect the Word of God with the world of God."*

Dear Parents and Guardians:

A week at camp is an experience we hope your children will remember fondly for a lifetime. At Ewalu, we strive to make these memories positive and empowering. The Program Director and entire staff share the task of providing programs to build life skills and promote spiritual and personal growth.

Summer camp fosters independence and self-confidence in fun ways. Even so, separation from home and family can sometimes produce anxiety, especially for younger first-time campers. Likewise for parents or guardians, sending a child away to be cared for by people they don't know well can lead us to worry. How you as parents and guardians help your child prepare for camp makes all the difference in creating a positive camp experience, especially *before* they arrive. Here are a few important tips for what you can do to help your child before, during and after the camp week, so that your child is far more likely to be successful. You can help determine whether your child experiences the joy and self-confidence that results from attending a full week at summer camp:

1. No matter what *your* camp experience may have been, it is important to create a positive image of your *child's* upcoming experience. If campers are told they will have a safe and fun time, they will arrive at camp with a positive attitude, ready to embrace the new things you told them all about. ☺
2. When children are away, you miss them and they miss you. It is *difficult but crucial* for you not to focus on *how much you will miss them*, especially when talking to your child. Doing so builds fear and regret in a child's experience even before they start, and sets them up to fail. Instead, express how *eager you are* "to hear about their time at Camp Ewalu." Tell them how *proud you are* of them for trying something new! Remind them of the new friends they are about to make and the fun they will have. You can even send along self-addressed, stamped envelopes with paper and encourage them to write home.
3. Please don't make promises that Ewalu is unable to fulfill: especially a phone call home or to bring along a cell phone or device to a camping experience. Past experience shows that this is nearly *always* damaging to a child's ability to lower their stress during homesick times. We have 50+ years of success in responding to occasional homesickness. If you have concerns or questions, or just want to know how things are going, feel free to call camp at 563-933-4700.

Our staff this summer will be a tremendous group of Christian young people with lively faith and an overflowing love for youth! They are trained to accompany your child through a fun, safe, and meaningful camp experience. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's precious time here in the Christian community at Ewalu.

In God's Awesome Love,

Clark Baldwin, Executive Director

Jesse Klosterboer, Program Director