



The Benefits of Intentional Sibling Enhancement

Armeda Stevenson Wojciak, M.S., Connie Hayek, LMSW, Penthea Burns, MSW



Camp To Belong

Camp To Belong (CTB) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to reuniting brothers and sisters who are placed in separate foster care, kinship care and adoptive home placements for events of fun, emotional empowerment, sibling connection, and life-long memories shared together. Through CTB's 17 year history, over 4000 separated siblings have had the opportunity to create stronger sibling relationships while at 1 of CTB's 9 member camps throughout the world: Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, New York, Northwest (Oregon), Washington, Orange County (Southern California), and Australia. CTB has strategically created signature programming to enhance sibling relationships and provide an environment that empowers the youth with information about contact rights for their sibling relationships and options for their futures.

Sample

- N = 298
- Mean age of child = 12; SD = 2.6 (range 6-18)
- Number of times attended CTB = 1.7; SD = .9

Methods

- CTB has developed and evaluated the use of intentional sibling programming and the effect it has on those who attend camp.
- CTB conducted camper evaluations with six campsites consisting of 595 campers that addressed the overall impact CTB had on their sibling relationships and their ability to advocate for their sibling relationship.
- Evaluations were conducted while at CTB with the exception of 1 camp that mailed them after camp had ended
- Not all camps evaluations were analyzed due to methodological issues.
- All responses on a likert scale of agreement

Results

Amount of Agreement Among Campers (N = 298)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	AMOUNT OF AGREEMENT
I have special memories of the time I spent this week with my sibling(s) at Camp To Belong.	95.8%
Spending time at Camp To Belong gave my sibling(s) and me a chance to show that we care about each other.	94.3%
After this week at Camp To Belong I feel hopeful about my life and my future.	94.2%
Spending time with my sibling(s) at Camp To Belong gave me the feeling that I am connected to my sibling(s).	93.9%
Spending time at Camp To Belong helped me have a positive attitude about myself.	92.7%
Do you feel that you can advocate (speak up for what you want) for more contact with your sibling(s)?	90.3%
Spending time at Camp To Belong helped me know that I can count on my sibling(s) to be there for me if I need them.	90%
I believe that my family is strong even when we face big problems.	89.6%
Spending time at Camp To Belong helped me feel like my sibling(s) really understand(s) me.	86.8%
Spending time at Camp To Belong helped me understand more about myself.	85.1%



Clinical Implications

- Special attention should be paid to **sibling relationships** of those in the foster care system and those who have been adopted. **Strategically enhancing sibling relationships** through intentional signature CTB sibling programming has demonstrated positive effects on not only the individual camper, but also their relationship with their family.
- The setting at each CTB is very casual and **encourages siblings doing things together**. In a practitioners office it would be recommended to facilitate some activities that can be bonding such as, having siblings **play board games together**, create **arts and crafts** that they can each **take home with them** from session, and educate them about their **rights for contact**.

Camp To Belong P.O. Box 1146 Marana, AZ 85653

www.camptobelong.org