In this section you’ll find some of the highlights of SuperCamp from our life-skills curriculum including:

• our guide for personal excellence – the 8 Keys of Excellence

• valuable communication skills to help convey needs and feelings in a positive manner

• relationship and problem-solving tools to help resolve conflicts

• the value of “venturing out” of comfort zones

• the importance of Living Above the Line

“We’ve discovered that what’s at the heart of each of these [teen] problems is a lack of self-awareness and a desire to be understood, combined with a need for social, thinking, and learning skills. At SuperCamp we’ve seen that when teens enter a uniquely positive environment of individual trust and acceptance, they begin to move beyond these problems. They feel safe to express themselves, explore who they are, and connect with one another.”

from The 7 Biggest Teen Problems and How to Turn Them Into Strengths – Bobbi DePorter
SuperCamp’s 8 Keys of Excellence provide a basic framework for personal effectiveness and for living life successfully. When we hold ourselves accountable for how we apply the Keys, everyone is more willing to be held accountable for their choices and actions. Together we build the positive, supportive environment necessary for learning and growing.

The Eight Keys of Excellence:

**Integrity**  Match behavior with values. Demonstrate your positive personal values in all you do and say. Be sincere and real.

**Failure Leads to Success**  Learn from mistakes. View failures as feedback that provides you with the information you need to learn, grow, and succeed.

**Speak with Good Purpose**  Speak honestly and kindly. Think before you speak. Make sure your intention is positive and your words are sincere.

**This Is It!**  Make the most of every moment. Focus your attention on the present moment. Keep a positive attitude.

**Commitment**  Make your dreams happen. Take positive action. Follow your vision without wavering.

**Ownership**  Take responsibility for actions. Be responsible for your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Own the choices you make and the results that follow.

**Flexibility**  Be willing to do things differently. Recognize what’s not working and be willing to change what you’re doing to achieve your goal.

**Balance**  Live your best life. Be mindful of self and others while focusing on what’s meaningful and important in your life.
COMFORT ZONES

Senior / Junior

At SuperCamp students are encouraged and empowered to take the risk of moving out of their comfort zones. We all have a comfort zone that includes the things we feel comfortable with: activities, people, foods, places, and ways of being. Most students tend to want to stay in their comfort zone because it’s easy, familiar, and yes, comfortable. Everything outside may seem too risky, shaky, or dangerous.

Yet, as with anything too comfortable, our comfort zone can become boring and stagnant and if we stay in there long enough we run the risk of getting stuck in a rut. Slowly we peek out and finally venture out of our comfort zone, in spite of our internal voice screaming, Don’t go out there – stay here where it’s comfy! Initially that first step makes us feel weird and shaky, but soon the discomfort subsides and eventually we find that our comfort zone has expanded. By moving out of our comfort zone we have experienced something new, we have learned, we have grown.

LIVING ABOVE THE LINE

Senior

As a foundation for communication and personal interaction, living above the line highlights and puts into practice one of the 8 Keys of Excellence – Ownership: take responsibility for actions. Students learn there are two ways to live: above the line and below the line.

Living above the line is about taking responsibility for our actions. Those who live above the line have greater control – and therefore greater success – because they take ownership for their current situation. They take ownership of their education, of their relationships, and of their attitudes, affecting all areas of their lives.

Living below the line is about laying blame, justifying, denying, and quitting.

“Communication is important: it’s the universal relationship fuel. Communication grows relationships – relationships grow success.”

from Quantum Success: 8 Key Catalysts to Shift Your Energy Into Dynamic Focus – Bobbi DePorter
A COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUE

A SuperCamp technique that’s effective for resolving relationship problems or giving praise is OTFD. OTFD stands for the steps in this communication process. The goal behind this tool is to articulate feelings in a positive and direct manner.

People feel more comfortable when they don’t have to guess what another is feeling or thinking – OTFD facilitates clear and “visible” communication. By practicing this technique regularly you and your son or daughter can build a safe environment to resolve differences, and maintain a strong relationship.

**Something you observed with your senses that anyone else can observe.**
Example: “I noticed you came home 20 minutes after your curfew last night.”

**A thought or opinion about what you observed.**
Example: “My thought is that you don’t respect the rules we agreed on about a curfew.”

**A feeling you had about what you observed.**
Example: “I feel disappointed because you didn’t uphold your side of our agreement.”

**What you want (your desire).**
Example: “My desire is for you to be responsible enough to get yourself home on time. If you are going to be late, I would like to have an agreement that you will call before your curfew.”

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*Speaking with Good Purpose is the cornerstone of healthy relationships.*

Communicate with:

- positive intent
- honesty
- directness

*from The 8 Keys of Excellence: Principles to Live By – Bobbi DePorter*
FOUR-PART APOLOGY
AN APOLOGY TECHNIQUE

When an apology is necessary, we suggest the Four-Part Apology. This technique allows the person to look beyond the actual incident to consequences of behavior. By defining those consequences and choosing a different behavior, both individuals remain thoughtful and supportive rather than angry or defensive. If you and your child practice this tool with each other, apologies will be easier and more meaningful.

1. **Acknowledge**
   Take responsibility for your actions and behaviors. Use “I” statements.
   
   Example: “I acknowledge that I changed our plans about babysitting without checking in with you, and I only told you at the last minute.”

2. **Apologize**
   Acknowledge the cost to others. If unaware of cost, ask.
   
   Example: “I apologize for not respecting you and for not checking in with you before changing my plans. I know it was hard for you to give up the plans you made with your friends because I needed you to babysit.”

3. **Make It Right**
   Deal with the consequences of behavior. Ask the person, “Is there anything I can do to make it right?”
   
   Example: “I want to do something to help maintain our relationship. What can I do to make it right?”

4. **Recommit**
   Make a commitment to appropriate behavior. Commit to not having the same behavior again.
   
   Example: “I agree to always respect you and to always check in with you before making any plans that involve you.”
AFFINITY ACTIVITY
ENHANCING RELATIONSHPES

One of the communication tools we use at SuperCamp to build or enhance relationships is called the *Affinity Activity*. All ages benefit from sharing an aspect of themselves and learning more about the thoughts and feelings of others. To enhance communication with your child, we recommend trying this exercise. Here’s how it works:

Ask each question once and respond to the reply with “thank you.” Each person has an opportunity to ask the series of questions three times. From this base of experience further conversation can occur.

**Step 1:**
Tell me something I don’t know about you.

**Step 2:**
Tell me something you like about me.

**Step 3:**
Tell me something we may have in common.

ACTIVE LISTENING

One communication tool taught at SuperCamp has nothing to do with talking, yet it is a key to building and enhancing relationships. *Active listening* will improve any relationship by building mutual understanding and trust. Use these listening skills to improve communication with your child.

A good listener ...

- sits facing the person with an open, available posture
- maintains good eye contact
- gives encouragement (nods, u-huhs, etc.)
- reflects feelings and content
- shows empathy