

Ten Things Caring Student Leaders Always Do

1. Make the health and safety of children their number one priority.

If not with the children, a caring Student Leader always knows where the children are at all times. Caring Student Leaders use a calm tone when re-directing children that may be hurting or disrespecting themselves, other people, or the environment.

2. Play with the students.

Caring Student Leaders are always with their group of children, watching, listening, playing, and having fun together.

3. Listen to children and have one-on-one conversations with each child.

Each child needs special individual attention, and caring Student Leaders make time for each child everyday. Listen deeply, and let the child talk.

4. Create enthusiasm.

Sing, chant, laugh, be cheerful, enthusiastic, and genuinely enjoy being with the kids.

5. Praise and encourage children.

Praise a child whenever he or she does something creative, unselfish, altruistic, or beneficial for the whole group, or makes an attempt to overcome a personal challenge.

6. Lead children, but never be bossy.

Caring Student Leaders are leaders, not bosses. A boss says, "I"; a leader says, "We". A boss intimidates; a leader inspires. A boss shouts, "Do it!"; a leader says, "Let's do it together!" The boss makes it drudgery; a leader makes it a game.

7. Check in everyday with your group of students.

Caring Student Leaders check in with their students, share experiences, laugh together, discuss problems, make plans. This is a great student-directed time to let them make choices and have their voices heard by their peers, and learn how to listen to those of their peers.

8. Be aware of children that need special help.

Caring Student Leaders must be aware of children that are unhappy and having problems. Those who are very aggressive or very quiet need special attention. Never force a child to talk, but try to encourage the student, giving space to help the child feel comfortable and safe.

9. Put the needs of the children first.

To work effectively with children, you must put their needs ahead of your own. For example, serve the children first at meals, spend the majority of your time during the day interacting with the children, helping them in the middle of the night if needed, etc.

10. Give special attention to each child at bedtime.

At bedtime, say a personal goodnight to each child. Read stories, sing a quiet song. This can be a difficult time of the day for children who are away from home. Your attention to each child can assure they'll get to sleep soundly.