

# Pro tips for being a Family Leader

*Your job is to create the experience — not just have one.*

Last year you were led. **This year, you lead.** The retreat will feel completely different — and that's the point. Every moment this weekend is a chance to pour into your family and help them have the experience you had.

## During sessions

*Always on*

- **Watch, don't wander.** You are an observer. Your job is to notice who's leaning in, who's shutting down, who might need a word of encouragement after.
- **Unleash your observer.** Take mental notes (or jot them down) — reactions, moments, breakthroughs. You'll use these to lead your family's debrief afterward.
- **Gather superlatives.** You're building a picture of each person in your family all weekend long. Notice the funny, the brave, the surprising moments — you'll celebrate them at the closing.
- **Rely on your team.** Use this time to chat with your co-FL about any challenges you're having, or text the group chat to get some other perspectives.

★ *Some sessions are marked on the schedule as ones you CAN participate in — jump in fully for those! When in doubt, observe.*

## Downtime & meals

*Stay present*

- **You set the tone.** If you're on your phone, they'll be on their phones. Put it away first — then your family will follow.
- **Fill the silence.** Have a question ready. Start a game. Tell an (appropriate) story. Awkward silence is just an opportunity you haven't taken yet.
- **Draw people out.** Learn names fast. Ask follow-up questions. Remember what people said earlier and bring it back up — it makes people feel seen.

*Pro tip: Meals are your best relationship-building window. Sit with different people. Don't cluster with your fellow leaders.*

## Cabin responsibilities

*Hold the line*

- **Make it feel safe.** Your cabin is where people let their guard down. Be someone worth trusting — keep what's shared there private, and escalate any concerns to the staff.
- **No sneaking out — full stop.** If someone tries, you redirect. Not with a lecture, just a calm "not tonight, let's hang here." Your presence is the deterrent.
- **Be the example.** Lights out means you too. Respect the rules visibly. They will rise or sink to what they see from you.

*You are not the fun police — you're the safe person in the room. There's a difference.*

## Bring the energy

*Embrace the awkward*

- **Be the weird one.** Volunteer. Be ridiculous. Do the silly thing. When a leader goes first, everyone else has permission to join in.
- **Awkward is the price of entry.** The best moments at retreat start as the most awkward ones. Don't let the awkward stop you — lean into it and drag your family with you.
- **Energy is contagious.** You don't have to be loud to be energetic. Genuine enthusiasm — even quiet, steady enthusiasm — sets the temperature for everyone around you.

*Remember: they are watching you for cues on whether this is safe to enjoy. Make it look worth it.*

## Bring your magic!

Questions? Find a staff member. You're not alone out here.