

Frequently Asked Questions and Concerns About BA/CIA

1. Why do volunteers need to pay to mail camp brochures when Joy El already mails at least one to each BA/CIA student? Isn't that poor stewardship to duplicate mail?

Our goal is to encourage as many children as possible to attend summer camp. Many years ago we sent only one brochure, and that was sufficient. Now, the “rules” of marketing have changed and more promotion is necessary. Additionally, hand-addressed brochures (from individuals we know) have a greater likelihood of being read.

2. Why does BA/CIA need to promote Retreats and Summer Camp, especially in locations far from Joy El where there are other camps closer, or where we have our own denominational camp?

The heart of Our Mission at Joy El is “Providing opportunities for people to experience life-change through personal encounters with God”. Bible Adventure/Christians In Action, retreats, and summer camp are all different tools we use to do this. The more opportunities that children have to experience these tools, the greater the likelihood they will deepen their relationship with Jesus. In the past, we invited other camps to provide the same discounts that we provide, but they were not interested in doing this (unless we paid).

3. Joy El already expects us to be at BA/CIA more than an hour each week, so why do we need to stay for WRAP UP? We need to get home. We are busy people.

This is a good question. We appreciate all the time that volunteers serve in BA/CIA each week. WRAP UP (celebrating and praying together) is a great way to be encouraged by sharing what God is doing and learning from others how to better minister to children. It also promotes unity and teamwork among BA/CIA staff.

4. Why must we refer to our Bible Adventure/Christians In Action as Joy El Generation, especially in distant locations where people have never heard of Joy El Generation?

There are several important concerns here. First, our insurance is under the Joy El name. Second, students and parents need to see the connection between the Bible Adventure/Christians In Action and Camping programs. It will make it easier for them to attend. Third, it makes it easier for students to connect to our 4.12 Leadership Training Program. Finally, Bible Adventure/Christians In Action is bigger than any one specific school program and when expanding into new areas, this helps prospects see the bigger picture.

5. What is wrong with not requiring students to obey the rule of only learning one memory verse on-site while other verses must be memorized before arriving at BA/CIA?

Our goal in Scripture Memory is for students to understand, internalize, and live out God's Word. If we allow them to “read and say” verses rather than have God impart it into their heart, the long-term impact will be lessened. “Read and say” does not require students to memorize verses, which is what points are awarded for. Furthermore, we desire that our staff and volunteers model integrity. Following rules is a very important way to do this and to help our students see Godly character in action.

6. Why can't I give gifts to my group of students without giving to every student in BA/CIA?

As much as possible, we want all students to be treated equally. Students who have not received gifts will surely feel left out. In addition, gift giving could cause students to prefer one listener over another which could hinder relationship-building. Finally, not all listeners have ample financial resources to purchase gifts. We don't want them to feel undue pressure to do so.

7. Why is Joy El trying to make all BA/CIAs the same by identifying Standards? What's wrong with being creative and doing things differently?

We believe in creativity. We also believe that God has created each person differently and given them different spiritual gifts. We recognize that each Bible Adventure/Christians In Action class will be different, but we want to ensure that Standards are met by all BA/CIAs to provide an ideal learning environment. In other words, we want to make sure that the philosophical way that we do ministry is maintained.

8. Why do we have to have Invite a Friend and Volunteer Day when we don't have enough volunteers to start with or when the bus or van is already full?

Joy El's mission is to provide opportunities for people to experience life-change through personal encounters with God. We have been given the Great Commission. BA/CIA provides an excellent opportunity to "go into all the nations." On the surface, there may appear to be hindrances to inviting more students, but we do not want that to stop us. We realize that this can be uncomfortable for many. However, oftentimes things we have to do that aren't comfortable are often good for us. God uses them to grow us and to reveal His glory. Year after year, we have seen God move as we have acted in faith. He has provided transportation when we thought we didn't have any. He has brought more volunteers when we didn't think any more could be found. We are committed to reaching more children and do not want any to miss the opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

9. Why do we need to call each student who did not return to BA/CIA in the fall, or return from Invite a Friend and Volunteer Day? If God wants them there, they will come back.

Again, we are committed to the Great Commission. Year after year, we have seen how powerful personal relationships are. We have seen children come to BA/CIA precisely because someone has invited them. They are honored that someone wants them there. Children have many things that pull for their time. We want to show them that they are valuable to us; calling them is one way of doing this.

10. When I have a question or concern, why do I need to talk to my Equipping Coordinator first instead of going directly to the Assistant Director or the Director of BA/CIA? Often the Equipping Coordinator will need to ask the Assistant Director or Director anyway. It seems like a waste of time.

This question really has to do with lines of authority. First, let us clarify that we assume a school coordinator is reading this. If not, all other volunteers are to contact the school coordinator first. Secondly, please be assured that 90-98% of the questions you ask will be easily addressed by your Equipping Coordinator. They are very knowledgeable and have great understanding of your particular BA/CIA needs. The Equipping Coordinator will be able to give you the best answer. If they are unsure about how to answer, they will check with the Assistant Director or Director. At this time, the Assistant Director will be able to help the Equipping Coordinator learn how to better answer the question next time.

11. Why focus so much on growth? Isn't quality better than quantity?

We agree that quality is very important. Joy El is very committed to quality. We are continually evaluating and assessing our programs to make them better. The concern is usually regarding "bigger is better." If our desire is merely to get bigger, it would be a problem. But, that isn't our desire. Joy El is committed to "Igniting a generation that seeks Him" ministry. As we grow, we maintain quality by increasing the number of volunteers so that we can maintain a low student to adult ratio no matter how big we grow. To reiterate, we are committed to the Great Commission. We want to reach as many lives as we can.

12. Why do we need a financial policy for our BA/CIA? Why can't we just collect money for things for our students or ask churches to contribute for that purpose?

We are committed to doing everything with transparency and high standards. We want our Bible Adventures and Christians In Action classes to be focused on ministering to children, not raising and handling money. The focus of each individual BA/CIA should be on teaching the Bible and imparting life to students. Therefore, all monies handled at the local level must follow Joy El's policy as outlined in the School Coordinator's Manual.

13. Volunteers view full-time and part-time staff as "Joy El", but not themselves.

All of us, full and part-time staff, volunteers, and students, comprise Joy El. We are a body working together to fulfill the Great Commission through the ministry God has given us. We can't function without many people from the Body of Christ being part of this. We all serve God at Joy El. Some do it full-time as a profession and thus are paid (many raise support). That does not make them a more important part of this organization than others. God desires each one of us to join Him in ministry.

14. Why do you ask volunteers to do more and more? You can't expect volunteers to do as much as paid employees.

Joy El is committed to helping people develop people, particularly the gifts and abilities that God has given us. God has created us to do "good works" (Ephesians 2:10), and we want to help people fulfill their God-given calling. When we ask for more, we aren't asking for our personal benefit, but for the benefit of the Kingdom. The joy is that everyone benefits: children and volunteers.

15. Joy El is all about numbers and is like a business, not a ministry.

We feel badly when we hear this. There are usually different things that create this perception, but we have found that it generally comes from two sources. The first has to do with money. People get uncomfortable when we ask for funds or if we say no to a program because of lack of funds. Finances are not our first concern. We always prayerfully seek God's guidance regarding decisions. The reality, however, is that we want to operate long-term. We trust in God regularly to keep the ministry running. The second concern has to do with setting goals for numbers of students and volunteers in our programs. Goals can make people uncomfortable, but understand that we prayerfully seek God's guidance as we set annual goals. Goals help us strategize and work toward the plans God has for us. They help keep us focused on doing what God wants us to do.