



Luca is very anxious about attending the Year 7 camp. He's been worrying about this since the high school orientation day. Luca's parents spoke to the Year 7 Advisor. Luca developed a plan with his Year 7 Advisor, L&S teacher and parents.

Small Steps for Luca

1. Luca and his parents researched the camp website and travelled to have a look on the weekend.
2. Luca practices breathing and mindfulness techniques to use when he feels anxious.
3. Year 7 watched the social story video about last year's camp and had a Q and A with teachers and a few Yr 8 students who attended the camp last year.
4. Luca has a sleepover at a friend's house.
5. The Year 7 students selected two camp activities after the class research the activities available. They could try others once they got there.
6. Luca and his teacher make a plan in case he feels anxious and needs extra support.
7. Luca went on the Year 7 camp and checked in regularly with a teacher and his "buddy."

Planning

The Stage 4 teachers developed a strategy for the Year 7 camp, focusing on encouraging the participation of students experiencing anxiety about attending camp.

Incorporating the social story, Q&A and buddy system as a part of the Year 7 camp experience assists many individual students not just those experiencing anxiety symptoms. For example, some children are not used to being away from their family overnight.

Family involvement in researching, finding photos and maps helps children visualise where the cabins, dining area, lake and activities courses etc are situated and then visualise themselves there.

Allowing students to choose one or two camp activities means anxious students can focus on getting through one task and not feel overwhelmed. Once they are there they can watch classmates first and then have a go at other activities if they want to.

Designing activities for inclusivity

Some students may feel less confident to undertake activities at camp and feel others will judge their performance.

Ensure **process** is emphasised over **outcome** so effort and problem solving have a greater reward than speed or winning. Call out everyone's individual strengths and what they bring to challenges.

Be strategic when grouping students- mix confident, quieter, louder, empathetic students together rather than have popularity groupings.

Run an activity concurrently so small groups are working at the same time, not in front of a large group.

Include non competitive activities- hikes, star gazing walks, outdoor art etc

Your Challenge Your Choice is a great camp motto. Each day students decide their own level of challenge, roles within groups- build, design, gather ideas etc