

# A BETTER Example

By Shaneen Cloward

Our Young Women leaders decided that an overnight trip was just the thing to get us ready for camp. They chose the banks of the San Pedro River in southern Arizona, USA, to set up our practice camp.

After rolling out the sleeping bags, the other girls and I wanted to explore and get into the water. The leaders thought some discussions on safety and first aid should come first. So we all sat in a shady spot near the river for the lesson.

Paying attention wasn't easy when we could see the river shining in the sun. The breeze was playing in the cottonwood trees as Sister Brown<sup>†</sup> talked. We had all heard the lesson before, and I just couldn't understand why we needed it now. We knew all about putting pressure on a wound to stop the

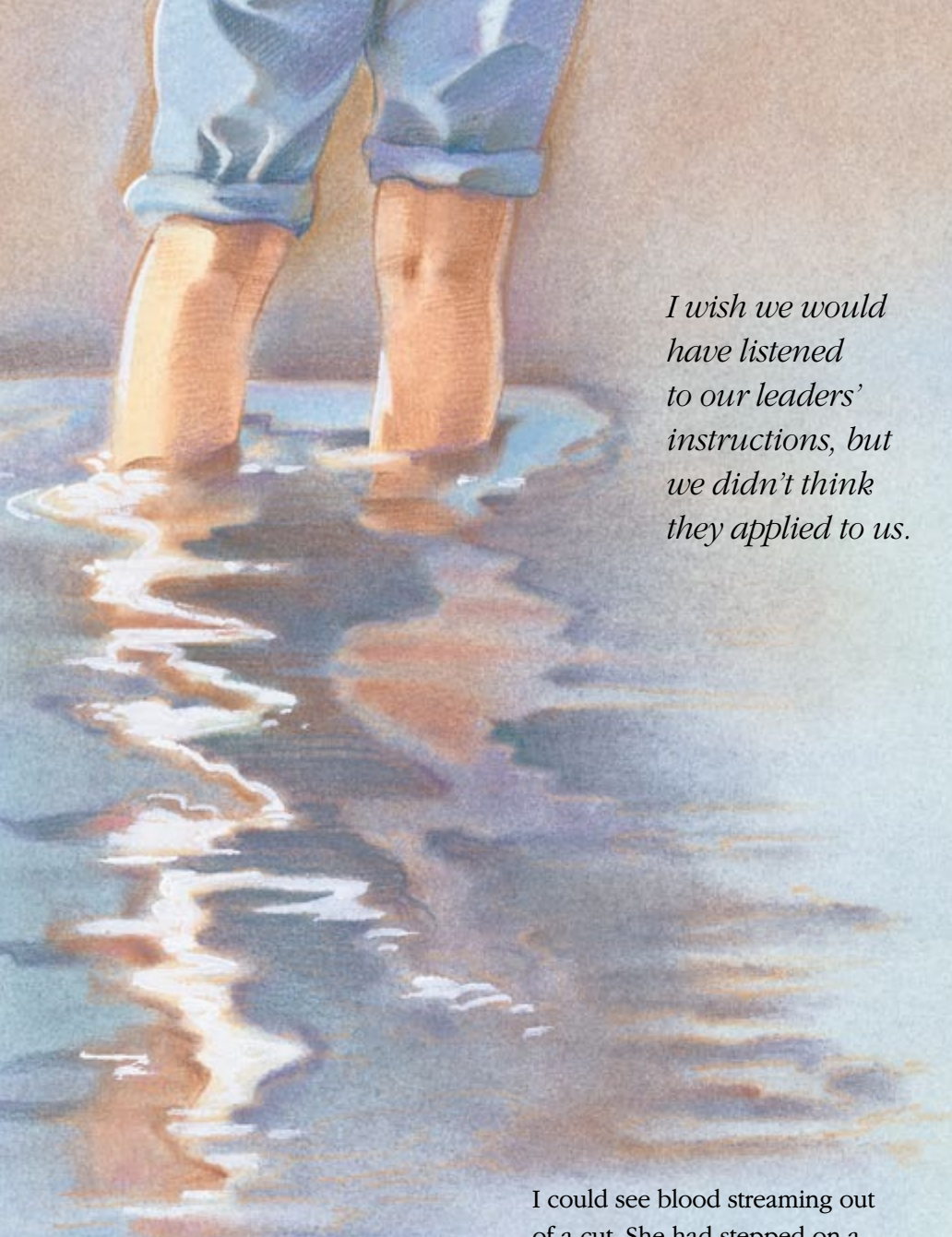
bleeding, but there she was telling us again.

Before they let us go, the leaders repeatedly told us not to go in the river without shoes. "You never know what's in there, and you've got to protect your feet."

As I got to the edge of the river, some of the other girls were already splashing in the water. The water was brown with mud. It was less than a foot deep all the way across, and I couldn't believe that it was dangerous.

I decided to take off my shoes. I had brought only one pair, and I didn't see the sense in getting them wet and having soggy shoes all day. My two best friends, Martha





*I wish we would have listened to our leaders' instructions, but we didn't think they applied to us.*

The lesson of 10 minutes before began to sink in. The girls, who had been standing around Elizabeth and watching her bleed, elevated her foot and put pressure on the wound.

Elizabeth was taken to the hospital, where she was told that she had almost cut her foot in half. It required numerous stitches and would take a long time to heal. The next time I saw her she was using crutches.

I never thought I could or would ever convince my best friend to do something that would hurt her that badly. I had never seen myself as a bad influence before.

Now I'm trying to be a better example to my friends, and I'm more willing to listen to my leaders. They know what they're talking about. **NE**

*\*Names have been changed*

and Elizabeth, both reminded me of what the leaders had said. I took my shoes off anyway and explained my reasons. Martha took hers off too. Elizabeth was more hesitant. I waded out into the water and with a sarcastic tone said, "Keep them on if you want to."

She sat down, took off her shoes, and ran into the water. After about five steps she stopped, turned pale, and calmly said, "Oh, no." When she pulled her foot out of the water,

I could see blood streaming out of a cut. She had stepped on a broken bottle.

The sight of blood made my brain go numb. Even though I had just been listening to a lesson on first aid, I had no idea what to do. I decided to run for help. Two others helped her out of the water.

I found Sister Brown and told her what had happened. She thought I was kidding. But when she saw Elizabeth sitting in the trail with blood gushing from her foot, she ran toward her shouting, "Put pressure on that cut!"



## **LISTEN**

"Please don't reinvent the moral wheel! Don't feel that you have to learn every tragic lesson in life personally.

"Listen to the words of the Lord. Listen to your leaders. Listen to your parents. Listen to the best that is within you. Above all listen to the sweet, soft, undeniable whispering of the Spirit which will teach you all things."

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "We Want the Best for You," *New Era*, Jan. 2010, 5.**