

Other Camping Resources

Schedules

Here are a few examples of schedules that may work for the director and campers alike!

Types of Schedules

1. Simple chronological schedule

This type of schedule usually has only two columns. It is characterized by time periods in the first column and the corresponding activity listed in the second column. Although this is easiest to use when everyone is doing the same thing at the same time, it can be modified to accommodate a large number of activities in any given time period.

Example:

12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:30	Rest Time
1:30-2:00	First Activity
2:00-2:15	Go to Next Activity
2:15-2:45	Second Activity

Each counselor has a list of what his or her activities are and leads the campers to them. Campers may write what each activity is in their copy of the schedule. If there is no standardized daily routine in the schedule, many camp directors provide a separate schedule for each day.

2. The Modular Schedule

The modular schedule is usually characterized by a matrix with time periods running along one edge and groups or cabin names along the other. Each group thus has a row or column to follow indicating specifically where the group should be at any given time. The campers follow the time over to the column or row representing their cabin to find their activity at that time period.

Example:

Time	Cabin 1	Cabin 2
12:00	Lunch	Lunch
1:00	Class	Swim
2:00	Swim	Quiz
3:00	Quiz	Sports

The problem with this commonly-used schedule is that campers often find it confusing.

Counselors may simplify this type of schedule by marking through the columns or rows that do not apply to their cabin or highlighting the columns or rows that do apply to their cabin.

3. Hybrid Schedules

Some camp directors choose to combine the two types mentioned above into a hybrid schedule. They reason that some activities involve all the campers (such as lunch). They see no need to repeat that information for each cabin or group. These camp directors use a chronological schedule where it is best suited and a modular one when the children will be involved in different activities.

Some camps have a single schedule, which is repeated for every day of the week. More often, however, the first and last days of camp require a special schedule, while the remaining days follow one pattern. Still other camps have a different schedule for each day. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of schedule. Select the one that best fits your camp purposes.

Scheduling Guidelines

1. Be sensitive to the characteristics of your campers in designing your camp schedule. Remember, young campers need to alternate strenuous activities with more sedentary ones.
2. Consider the climate in planning your schedule. Many children do not have an opportunity to swim when they are not at camp. They may be easily sunburned. Perhaps swimming in the early morning or late afternoon would be more healthful than in the heat of the day. Some ideas for mid-day activities are enjoying cooling snacks, using air-conditioned facilities, going on field trips, attending classes, and watching movies.
3. Keep schedules sufficiently busy to avoid too much unstructured time. Free time can lead to cabin raids, homesickness, and restlessness at night.
4. Routine in the camp schedule is not necessarily bad. Children need some predictability in their lives. A schedule that is constantly changing may produce unnecessary anxiety, particularly in younger or first-year campers. This anxiety can manifest itself as irritability, discipline problems, general uncooperativeness, or homesickness.
5. Schedule free time for counselors during the day. Don't wait until the campers are asleep. Counselors will need to be asleep then too. Schedule times when other workers supervise the children, so your counselors can relax. If you provide these breaks, you can rightfully expect your counselors to spend the rest of the time with their campers.
6. Wise camp directors have a 'bad weather' schedule ready to go.

Sample Letters

Letter to Pastors

Dear Pastor:

Earlier this month it was my privilege to direct the Children's Summer Camp. It was a great week. Besides the swimming, fishing, games, and the delicious camp food, we had some glorious spiritual victories. Twenty-one of the children accepted Christ as their personal Savior, and two of the children claimed sanctification.

Our eight counselors were prayed up and ready for the seventy-five kids that showed up on Monday morning.

Enclosed are the spiritual reports for the children who attended from your church. Please review them and pass them on to your children workers who would be in contact with these children.

In closing, I just want to thank each of you for your support in the Children's Camp program this year.

Sincerely,

Letter to Pastor and Sunday School Superintendent

Dear Pastor and Sunday School Superintendent:

Summer camps are over, and we just wanted to write to thank you and your church for being a part of this important task of winning boys and girls. Many made decisions that will change their lives from now on.

The camp theme does not have to end for your boys and girls. Continue to provide opportunity to help them grow mentally, socially, physically, and spiritually.

Let's do everything in our power to conserve this generation for God and the Church.

Sincerely,

Application Tips

Camping Application Forms

Camp application forms are designed to accomplish several goals:

1. Create a permanent record of every person who attends camp—staff as well as campers.
2. Provide information on persons to contact in the event of severe discipline problems or an emergency.
3. Provide necessary information on the persons attending camp such as their spiritual background, home church, and medical information.
4. Inform potential campers, parents, and staff of camp policies, items they will need to bring to camp, and other items of interest.
5. Obtain parental or guardian consent for the child to participate in the camping program. Some camps are expanding this consent to include a waiver of liability on the part of the church and its auxiliary organizations in the event of loss or harm incurred by the child. It should be noted, however, that these waivers, even when signed and notarized, generally do not protect the church in the event of negligence or criminal action. The camp is the custodian of the child and is serving in the place of the parent and can be held liable for mishandling that duty. (Note: the General Children's Camping office is not a legal firm and does not give legal advice. The above statements are for information purposes only, and questions should be directed to your legal counsel.)

Given these purposes, it is important to have an application form which serves all of them.

Ideas for Improving Applications

1. Ask for a school photo. Most children have inexpensive photographs from school. Ask parents to attach a photo to the application. It would be invaluable if the child is lost or runs away.
2. Ask for a list of names of persons who are allowed to pick up the child in the event of an emergency. Inform parents that you will refuse to release the child to anyone whose name is not on the list. Don't let your camp be easy prey to kidnappers, who maybe family members or strangers masquerading as policemen or other officials.
3. Include a section for dietary restrictions. Many children have food allergies, or parents may wish to restrict their child's intake of sugar or others foods. Be sure this information is distributed to the kitchen crew, snack shack operators, and counselors.
4. Allow a space for parents to give specific instructions to the counselors. This gives them helpful information about their campers.
5. Include an explanation of your camps discipline policies on the application. Check your state regulations to ensure your policies comply with state laws.
6. Consider unifying applications for all camps and having them professionally printed. This would allow you to have the applications printed in self-duplicating sets of four copies. This provides a copy of the complete application for each of the following persons: parents, camp director, camp nurse or doctor, and the counselor. An alternative is to photocopy all applications as they are received.