

Activities & Games

Activities Kids (and Directors) Rave About

Camp is a time for making memories. Activities are a part of what makes camp really special. We asked camp directors what their campers' favorite activities were. Almost all of them listed swimming, and many listed chapel. Here are some of the more unusual favorite activities they told us about.

"Our campers' all-time favorite activity is dressing up their counselor. We have a contest to see which cabin came up with the best costume. We also make mail call a lot of fun."

"We have a hot dog roast with a hayride."

"We invite a zoo representative to bring live animals to camp. Campers also enjoy our homemade water 'Slip 'N' Slides.' It's easy. Lay plastic on the ground or gently sloping hill, and run water down it."

"Air rifle target shooting is always popular."

"Horseback riding (for many it is their only opportunity to ride) and boat races are very popular."

"We have one night during camp that is 'Missionary Night.' We have a missionary on furlough come for a special service. This year we took a special offering for the District Boys and Girls Project. Our offering was over \$150.00. This not only gives them the chance to help with these needs, but also lets them have first-hand contact with a missionary."

"Great excitement comes through Bible quizzing. Fond memories also come from the chapel services and the group life of the week."

"Campers enjoy our dress-up banquet on Thursday night. The staff serves the children their meal. The giant super slide is another highlight for many. Use heavy-duty plastic. Wet and soap the slide and the kids. They also enjoy a fun time at night. We show films, play games, and have campers perform cheers for their cabin or team."

"The favorite activity in our camp has been our talent and skit night. On the closing night of camp we have each squad present a skit. It is also the night to play a joke on the director. Over the last three years we have seen some wonderful talent and some great skits. They have also pulled some pretty good stunts on the director, providing a good laugh for everyone."

Other Tried & True Activities

One director utilizes the nearby Nazarene university for her camps. The college sends a recreation team to do the camp sports and evening activities. They blend well with the kids and have great ideas for age-appropriate games.

Give a "Cleanest Dorm" award each day. Winning dorms go first in line for lunch and dinner that day. Fundraising: One Houston, Texas, camp worked in cooperation with a Professional Golfers Association, called Birdies for Charity. Through a cooperative effort, this camp was able to raise \$6,000.00. Consider partnering with a charity organization to offset the expense of the camp.

Activities Ideas:

Planning camp activities that will appeal to all the campers is difficult. The following is a list of activities that have been included in camp schedules by district camp directors.

Sports		
Aerobics	Archery	Baseball
Basketball	Field Hockey	Fishing
Foot Races	Hiking	Kickball
Riflery	Soccer	Swimming
Tennis	Touch Football	Volleyball
Educational Activities		
Astronomy	Bible Classes	Bible Quizzing
Bicycle Safety	Boating	Botany
Canoeing	Caravan Badges	Cooking
Crafts	Drama	Drug Abuse Prevention
Ecology	Field Trips	Fire Safety
First Aid	Gun Safety	Horseback Riding
Lace Braiding	Lifesaving	Music
Musicals	Nature Hikes	Outdoorsmanship
Photography	Puppetry	Sign Language
Sexual Abuse Prevention	Survival	Swimming Lessons
Just for Fun		

Campfire Stories	Greased Watermelon Battles	Miniature Golf
Model Airplanes	Paddle Boats	Red Rover, Red Rover
Relay/Sack Races	Singing Silly Songs	Skits
Train Rides	Treasure Hunts	Water Sliding

What To Do When it Rains

Rain is a blessing unless there is too much of it or it comes during camp week. Few things can cause as much chaos in a camp schedule as rain. So many of the activities involve being outdoors that rain can be a problem if the camp director has not planned ahead. The key to surviving a camp rainstorm is to "be prepared" with a rain schedule. One experienced camp director says he rotates 8 or 10 activities through the day. There are two ways to react when rain comes to camp. One is to try to get away from it. The other is to make the most of it. (Note: Have a centrally located shelter established in the event of dangerous storms. Train counselors how to get campers there in an orderly fashion.)

Make the Most of the Rain...

"Build a water slide! Simply spread a large sheet of vinyl on the side of a hill. The rain will keep it slippery."

"Have water balloon fights (or use cups or buckets). Make it interesting by pitting counselors against the top two camper groups."

"Stage your own Olympics in the Rain! We use our pavilion for mini-Olympics and do everything we would normally do if it weren't raining. Our campers don't seem to mind getting wet."

"Keep your schedule in the rain. Follow the regular program unless there is lightning, in which case you should move inside to the auditorium."

"Go swimming in the rain. Also, prepare in advance by including rain gear in the 'what to bring to camp' list."

Stay out of the rain...

"Play board games and watch videos."

"Run indoor relay races, have children's quizzing competition, or ask counselors to have a

special sharing time with the campers."

Make "Positive Posters." Provide a table full of construction paper, scissors, glue, and old magazines. Let campers cut out pictures of things that make them feel good and make collages with the pictures.

Make thank-you cards the Bible teachers, music teachers, cooks, or other camp workers.

"Have a Cabin Decorating Contest. Give simple awards in a variety of categories: most creative, prettiest, funniest, and so on."

"Have bean bag target practice, balloon blowing contests, bubble gum blowing contests, and Sword Drills (races to find and read scripture verses)."

"We turn the main auditorium into an Emergency Medical Hospital in which every counselor gives campers an ID and a crisis injury, i.e., mauled by a tiger while walking to church in Africa. All staff members dress as doctors and nurses, and sleeping bags cover the floor as beds. Patients enter from all doors into an admitting room and are assigned a mat. Nurses administer bandages (torn sheets) and pills (cheese balls and M & Ms); some 'patients' are given slings, crutches, etc. Then staff performs an operation skit where they are doing surgery on a patient. A brain scan reveals that 50 percent of the brain is clogged with bad books and music, with only one percent Scripture memory. The patient is infused with good music, books, etc. Then a monitor rechecks and determines that the patient now is equipped to think like a Christian. [This camp also invited a real missionary and nurse to tell about how they were called to their fields of service and to share some of their experiences in the mission field, such as finding cobras in desk drawers.] End the evening with an appropriate film."

"Have a Camp Sing-Along."

A Word about Earning Caravan Badges at Camp

The General Caravan Coordinator and the Camp Editor have the following advice for directors wanting to include work toward Caravan badges in the camp schedule:

1. Work on elective badges. Working on required badges creates problems for the local Caravan program.
2. Select badges which make the most of the camp setting. Some example from the Explorer (third- and fourth-grade) program include: Fishing, Horsemanship, Nature Study, Rocks, Swimming, Weather

Badges from the Adventurer (fifth- and sixth-grade) program include: Archery, Boating, knots, Personal care, Physical fitness II, Puppets

3. Offer a variety of badges to appeal to the individual interests of campers. Allow your campers to choose which badge they would like to earn.
4. Plan for campers to work on no more than one or two badges at camp. The badges should be signs of genuine achievement. Do not simplify the requirements to save time.
5. Award badges to campers who completed the requirements. Avoid the temptation to award badges for incomplete work toward a badge.
6. Remember, Caravan badges do not take the place of the camp Bible curriculum.