

Summer Camps

It is never too early to think about your child's plans for the summer. Summer camps offer children:

- A fun opportunity to try new activities and meet new friends
- A safe place to enjoy summer while families are working

Summer camps are not a "one size fits all" decision. There are many options to consider: day, overnight and specialty camps.

Did you know?

- Licensed camps must follow many regulations that help to assure the health and safety of campers. Each camp is inspected yearly by the Office of Early Childhood Division of Licensing
- Licensed camps must have local approval from the health department and fire marshal

Day Camps:

Did you know?

There are programs that are exempt from licensing:

- Classroom based instructional programs
- Licensed day care centers or day camp programs operated by a municipal agency

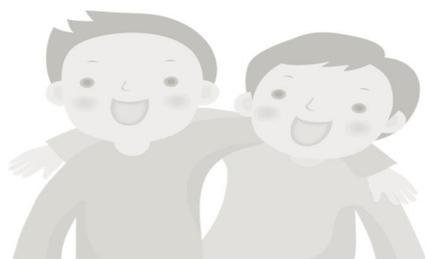
- Provide campers with various activities during the daytime hours
- Typically a lower cost option when compared to overnight and specialty camps
- Most day camps accept school age children but there are some that accept children as young as three years of age
- May offer part time and full time care
- May have typical hours between 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM but many offer additional hour options at an additional cost

Overnight Camps:

- Provide children with an overnight camping experience
- Creates a close sense of community
- May be more costly than day camps due to lodging and meals

Did you know?

You can check the complaint history of a licensed camp by visiting www.211childcare.org. Click on the "Licensing" tab under "Parent Resources" and scroll down to the "State of Connecticut eLicensing Website" link. You can also call the Division of Licensing at 1-800-282-6063



Specialty Camps:

- Provide a more specialized experience for children such as horseback riding, educational enhancement, computer technology, sports, art and performance arts
- Specialty camps may offer partial day or full day programs
- Serve children of various ages and abilities
- Are designed to meet a child's or family's unique needs (faith, bereavement, special needs, academics, etc.)

Narrowing Down Your Search

Consider the following when searching for a camp:

- Your child's personality and interests (sports, arts, drama, music, academics, etc.)
- Your child's special needs, limitations and strengths (academics, health, social skills, etc.)
- The size of the camp
- Your individual financial situation
- The location of the camp
- The experience your child wishes to have
- The amount of structure suitable for your child
- Whether your child is a first time camper or a returning camper
- Your child's preference of co-ed camp versus an all-boy or an all-girls camp

Day Camp or an Overnight Camp?

Did you know?

Once you decide which type of camp will best meet your child's needs, contact 2-1-1 Child Care. A Child Care Referral Specialist can assist you with referrals to licensed and licensed exempt camps throughout Connecticut

Some children may want to experience an overnight camp, but before making that decision, families need to determine if their child is ready for that type of experience. In addition, parents need to decide if they are ready for their child to be away from home for an extended period. Keep in mind that uneasy feelings you may have can be sensed by your child. Some camps provide day camp services for children with an overnight experience for older age groups. If you decide that you and your child are ready for an overnight camp, the benefits for your child may include:

- The opportunity to experience new things
- The development of independence, coping and social skills
- Memories that may last a lifetime



Interviewing Question to Use When Contacting Camps

Did you know?

Camps that are ACA accredited comply with up to 300 standards. This accreditation is voluntary and assures families that camps have gone beyond state regulated requirements for health, cleanliness and food service.

Did you know?

Camp ratios change based on the type of camp, and the age of the children.

For Day Camps, the ratio is one staff for every nine children under six years of age. (1:9) and one staff for every twelve children over age six (1:12).

For Residential Camps the ratio is one staff for every six children under eight (1:6) and one staff for every eight children over age eight (1:8)

Additional Questions for Overnight

Camps:

- ✓ Where do the children sleep?
- ✓ How are campers supervised?
- ✓ Is a counselor with the children at all times?
- ✓ Where are the toilets, sinks and showers located?
- ✓ What are the policies regarding calls from home, receiving packages, visitation, etc.?
- ✓ What is the policy/procedure if a child becomes uncomfortable or decides to come home?

- ✓ Is the camp licensed by the Office of Early Childhood Division of Licensing?
- ✓ Is the camp accredited by the American Camping Association?
- ✓ What are the camp's goals, or philosophy?
- ✓ What are the camp's policies?
- ✓ How is the camp unique?
- ✓ How long has the camp been in operation?
- ✓ What are some daily activities?
- ✓ What activities are available during inclement weather?
- ✓ How much does tuition cost? Are there additional fees?
- ✓ When is tuition due?
- ✓ Is financial aid available? What are the qualifications?
- ✓ Does the camp accept Care 4 Kids?
- ✓ Is there a refund policy?
- ✓ Is transportation provided? What supervision is provided?
- ✓ What are the qualifications of the staff?
- ✓ What is the educational level and past professional experiences of camp counselors?
- ✓ What type of background checks are conducted on all camp employees?
- ✓ What training does staff receive?
- ✓ How do you ensure that there is at least one camp staff member that is First Aid and CPR certified on the premise at all times?
- ✓ How are minor injuries and emergencies prepared for and handled?
- ✓ What accommodations are made for children with special needs?
- ✓ Is there a doctor or nurse on staff? On call?
- ✓ Does the camp have someone that is certified to administer medication?
- ✓ How does the camp meet the needs of children with allergies (bee stings, food, chemicals, etc?)
- ✓ Does the camp provide meals? If so, are the meals prepared on site?
- ✓ What kind of insurance does the camp carry?
- ✓ Who maintains the campgrounds and facilities?
- ✓ How does the camp maintain safety, security and supervision?
- ✓ What is the procedure to allow deliveries or visitors to enter the camp?
- ✓ What percentage of campers and counselors return?

Resources

www.211childcare.org

2-1-1 Child Care

www.acacamps.org

American Camp Association

www.ctcamps.org

Connecticut Camping
Association

www.summercamps.com

Camp Resources

www.kidscamps.com

Camp Resources

www.ctcare4kids.com

Connecticut Child Care Subsidy

