



Child Care Referral Service

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DISPELLING THE MYTHS ABOUT SUMMER CAMP

There are myths about summer camp that may dissuade some parents from sending their child. They think that the typical camp is way too expensive, too exclusive, or too time consuming. However, these days there is no such thing as a typical camp. The more than 8,500 camps across the country offer something for every budget, interest, personal schedule, and ability.

- A national survey of American Camping Association (ACA)-accredited camps reveals that camp enrollment has increased by approximately 8-10 percent each year since 1992.
- A research project, conducted by the National Camp Evaluation Project, which studied the impact of camps on children with disabilities, reported that “campers made positive gains during camp in various areas (self-reliance, independence, communication, self-esteem, etc.) that carried over to home and community settings.” All of the camps used in the study are ACA-accredited.
- The most popular session length of camp is one week, followed by two weeks, then one month.
- Summer camp is affordable. While fees will vary, resident camps range from \$15 to \$120 per day and day camps generally range from \$10 to \$50 per day.
- Last summer, 65 percent of camps surveyed gave out camperships. Total amounts given per camp ranged from small contributions to \$1,000,000.*
- Day camps show a slightly higher (1 percent) increase in enrollment than resident camps.*
- Most summer camps begin their season in June and operate until mid to late August. In the spring and fall, camps offer environmental education programs for children and programs in teamwork and communications to corporations and business organizations.
- The activities at camp are diverse. Among the most common activities that camp directors added to their program last year are mountain biking, performing arts, travel camp, and all types of water-craft activities, such as canoeing and boating.*
- Approximately 6,200 of America’s estimated 8,500 summer youth camps are operated by social service agencies and non-profit groups.
- Approximately 500,000 jobs are filled each summer by college students, teachers, doctors, nurses, food service directors, and many others who wish to make a positive difference in the lives of almost nine million children and youth.

* According to ACA’s 1998 Summer Camp Survey
Information taken from: <http://www.acacamps.org/media/myths.htm>

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