

**SAFETY & SUNSHINE | ART-BASED ACTIVITIES | MEMORABLE CAMP EXPERIENCES**

# CAMP

*Summer*

*Guide 2023*

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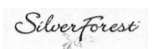
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# Safety and Sunshine

## Swimming lessons are important, enjoyable for children

**W**ater fun and summer seem to go hand in hand. So, getting the kids swimming lessons could be high on your summer's to-do list.

Not only can swimming lessons provide seasonal entertainment for youngsters, but they also teach a life-long practical skill that may help ensure their future safety around water.

### SAFETY

The American Academy of Pediatrics stipulates that children are generally “developmentally ready for formal swimming lessons” after they turn four.

They also recommend that children under age four should be provided with “touch supervision” and never be beyond arm’s reach of the supervising adult.

After age four, children can benefit immensely from learning to swim and the water safety lessons that coincide with formal swimming instruction. And some people have had success teaching babies to swim under professional supervision, although it’s not recommended by the pediatrics academy.

There are many benefits for children who participate in swimming classes. Any attempt to safeguard children around water in order to reduce a risk of drowning is ultimately beneficial.

### HEALTH

Kids enjoy many health benefits from learning to swim. Research suggests that children who swim develop both muscle strength and increased coordination.

The health benefits extend even further. Kids who take part in swimming lessons have been shown to demonstrate increased alertness.

Additionally, swimming regularly is an excellent form of exercise that can enhance kids’ fitness levels or even

promote healthy fitness for children with weight concerns.

Moreover, swimming can help children build self-confidence and support their ability to self-discipline.

### RECREATION

Of course, participating in swimming lessons is just plain fun for most kids who enjoy learning a new skill, beating the summer heat, and meeting new friends.

Many children are naturally drawn to water and enjoy its refreshing qualities. Learning to swim properly merely enhances their enjoyment of water.

Depending on the nature of the swimming course, children are likely to learn the various strokes associated with swimming such as the breast stroke and even the doggie paddle.

Kids learn how to float and may even learn how to dive from small or great heights. Kids also learn a plethora of safety tips such as how to help a friend who may be struggling in the water, why they should always swim with a buddy, or what to do if they experience cramping while swimming.

Many communities around the country offer swimming classes for children. One of the first places to consider is the community pool which typically offers summer swimming instruction sessions by age or skill level.

Local chapters of the American Red Cross and the YMCA, which may even have a pool onsite, can provide information about where to find qualified swimming instruction for children in your area.

Area fitness centers and high schools are also venues that may provide instruction. Even some amusement water parks now offer swimming instruction to children during the warm summer months.

# CAMP

Summer  Guide 2023

**Safety and Sunshine**.....Page 3

**Art-based extracurricular activities**.....Page 4

**How children can have memorable summer camp experiences**.....Page 6

**Give the Kids a Break**.....Page 7

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# Art-based extracurricular activities

**Art-based extracurricular activities are easy to find. Consider these ideas to get started.**

**S**tudents looking to expand their extracurricular horizons need look no further than the arts. Art-related extracurricular activities can enhance lessons learned in the classroom and provide a way to explore creative pursuits to help relieve stress and improve focus.

Art-based extracurricular activities are easy to find. Consider these ideas to get started.

## **Visit an art museum**

Those lucky enough to live close to an art museum can wander through the past or get artists' interpretations of the future. Many museums sponsor extracurricular activities for young artists, but even periodic visits using a student pass can provide all the inspiration creative young people need. Museums showcase everything from paintings to sculptures to historical

artifacts, so it's possible to find a specially curated collection that appeals to any artist's interests.

## **Enroll in an art course**

Students who enjoy art can improve their skills by taking art classes and courses that extend lessons learned during the school day. Perhaps a student wants to hone his or her skills in a particular medium? An art class can do that and even expand on lessons learned in the classroom.

## **Attend arts-related camps**

Summer camps come in all shapes and sizes, including ones geared around artistic endeavors. When school lets out for the summer or other breaks during the year, students can hang around with like-minded peers in specialty art camps.

## **Try other artistic activities**

The arts include everything from music instruction to acting in a play or musical to participating in a choral ensemble. Some children like to experience art through culinary endeavors. Students should not limit themselves to one activity. Dabbling in all sorts of activities may inspire students to pursue new interests.

## **Find art in daily life**

One does not need to be enrolled in a regimented program to enjoy art. Children can engage in art-related hobbies on their own at home or in the community. Find art in collecting leaves and flowers, building sand castles, taking photographs, or just about any other creative endeavor.

Arts-related extracurricular activities can be the perfect way to pass time outside the classroom.





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APPLY MEOW!





**The following are some tips for making summer camp an enjoyable experience.**



# How children can have memorable summer camp experiences

**A**s hours of sunlight increase, thoughts may turn to summer vacation. For many children, summer vacation wouldn't be the same without camp.

Adults may have their own fond memories of going to summer camp when they were children because of the opportunities it presented to be independent and meet new people. Campers often bond over shared experiences, whether they are planned activities or unexpected disasters like a rainstorm washing out a canoe trip. That is why so many parents choose to carry on the summer camp tradition when they have their own children.

However, some kids may not be ready to jump right into the summer camp lifestyle. Such youngsters may need extra reassurance and support to make the most of their time at camp. The follow-

ing are some tips for making summer camp an enjoyable experience.

## **Plan ahead**

Families can visit the camp in advance and get a lay of the land. Knowing what to expect in terms of facilities and activities can assuage some anxiety. It also will help campers hone in on what to pack and what to expect over the summer.

## **Try many new activities**

Summer camp is about expanding boundaries and interests. Campers should sign up for many activities, including those that normally may be out of their wheelhouse. A camper may be pleased to learn that a new craft activity or a sports game piques his or her interest.

## **Connect with fellow campers in advance**

If the camp has a social media presence, follow the camp's posts and connect with other like-minded campers even before they arrive. Talking with others who share similar interests can help campers feel more comfortable about meeting up once they arrive at camp.

## **Develop a rapport with camp counselors**

The saying you only get one chance to make a first impression extends to campers meeting camp counselors. When campers interact with counselors for the first time, they should be outgoing, polite and open to new ideas. Counselors will appreciate easy-going campers and could be good resources of useful information, such as how to score an extra dessert at mealtime.

## **Follow the safety rules**

While campers may spread their wings a bit at summer camp when not under the watchful eyes of parents, any mischief should not come at the expense of safety. Campers should stick to the safety protocol so that camp is not memorable for the wrong reasons.

## **Change another camper's experience**

A camper who recognizes a fellow camper is reserved and shy can invite that person to come sit with other friends at meals or to participate in an activity. This can help build a lasting friendship and make camp that much more enjoyable for someone in need.

Summer camp season is on the horizon and campers can take several steps to foster memorable and fun experiences along the way.



# Give the Kids a Break

Enjoy time off with a vacation at a summer camp

Those camps can provide fun, interesting things to see and do, and the best kinds of learning experiences. At summer camp, kids can get back to nature, hike through the woods, learn how to swim, go horseback riding and just enjoy time being a kid.

## SPECIALTY CAMPS

Kids can also attend a host of specialty summer camps designed to help them hone their skills and explore their interests.

From fitness camps and sports training camps to computer camps and even astronaut camps, there are plenty of ways to keep your kids entertained and engaged as the long, hot days of summer roll around.

Choosing a camp should be a family activity, with both parents and kids taking an active role in the discussion. As the parent, you may have your heart set on the type of camps you loved as a kid, but it is important that your child be interested in that type of camp as well. After all, your goal is to help your son or daughter forge his or her own memories, not to relive your own.

## SHOP AROUND

Cost is unfortunately a factor as well. As much as you might like to send your kid to Houston for astronaut camp, if it is not in the budget you might have to aim a little lower.

The key is finding a camp that is affordable, nearby enough to be convenient but still lots of fun. Fortunately,

there are plenty of camps that fit that category, some run by church groups, others run by non-profit and civic organizations.

You can find information about these camps in your local newspaper and by talking to other parents.

## LEAVING HOME

As the parent, you also need to decide whether a day camp or a sleepaway camp works best for you and your child.

Many young children are reluctant to spend the night at camp, but after they get over those initial jitters they may find that they love it. Even so, you might want to choose a day camp for the first year, then discuss a sleepaway camp for the next year.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Of course, these days camps are not just for kids. Parents can relive the fun and excitement of their own childhood days by attending theme camps ranging from football and baseball fantasy camps to music camps and computer camps.

No matter what your interest, you can find a camp that can accommodate it. Whether it is spending a week on the trail camping under the stars on a cattle roundup or spending a week with your favorite musicians learning to play guitar, you can find an adult fantasy camp that can accommodate your interests.

So as you pack little Johnny or Jane off for that first sleepaway camp adventure, why not consider booking an adventure of your own?

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