

Benefits of Camp*

*compiled by the America Camping Association (ACA)

The camp experience enriches lives and changes the world.

Camp provides children with a community of caring adults, who nurture experiential education that results in self-respect and appreciation for human value. All of the outcomes - self-identity, self-worth, self-esteem, leadership, and self-respect - build personal competencies. These personal competencies are reflected in the four "C's" of the camp community: compassion, contribution, commitment, and character! For years, campers' parents have reported that when their children return home from camp they are more caring, understand the importance of giving, are more equipped to stand up for what they know is right and are willing to be more responsible. These are the qualities that will help build a successful nation and a civil society.

Children are at less risk at camp where they have a sense of community, develop intergenerational relationships, and learn through first-hand experiences. Trained, caring adult role models help children feel loved, capable and included. Camp provides children with a safe, supervised, positive environment, which helps children grow.

Camp Professionals have enormous power in conveying simple teachable moments...special moments of passing experiences touched by the human spirit. These fleeting moments of time build three significant ACA values that are reflected in the benefits campers derive from camp.

ACA values people. The moments that result in the camp experience repeatedly express the value of people. We demonstrate that value through respect, honesty, caring, and sharing. Through the camp experience, young people learn to understand the strength of mankind. They also develop an appreciation for the qualities required to protect the fragile relationships needed to protect these relationships.

ACA values the natural world. We seek and appreciate what is real, genuine, and non-artificial. In seeking those qualities in people as well as in the actual world, we foster understanding of the importance of human connections for survival and of the critical connections to our physical world. Campers realize the need to protect not only one another, but also the environment in which they live. Our intent is to preserve and share that legacy with the next generation.

Finally, ACA values a sense of contribution. Our contributions are both obvious and subtle. The benefits of our work are both immediate and slow to emerge. Most significantly, although the experience itself is often fleeting, our impact on the human spirit lasts a lifetime. Children who attend camp develop connections with the world.

We never underestimate the simplest lesson or the briefest wink of time. It may be a star in someone's horizon for all eternity.

Benefits and Anticipated Outcomes of the Camp Experience

Social Skills Development

- Leadership
- Communication
- Participation

Self-respect and Character Building

- Responsibility
- Resourcefulness
- Resilience

Community Living/Service Skills

- Caring
- Fairness
- Citizenship
- Trustworthiness