

# The Value of Summer Camp

## Helping kids reach their full potential

Our high-tech lifestyle gives kids today opportunities never dreamed of before. But many kids miss out on some of the most important ingredients in becoming healthy adults: connection to nature; exercise and play; meaningful friendships and positive adult role models.

Time spent at a Summer Camp can restore balance to your children's over-scheduled days, teach life-long skills and allow friendships to flourish. It can help build a foundation for a successful and happy life. Here are some of the most tangible benefits kids get from summer camp:



## Community & Friendship

Facebook friends are nice but they're no substitute for real friends and mentors. At Summer Camp, kids make lifetime friends grounded in the experience of living together and caring for each other in many ways, from cabin life and mealtimes, to exciting activities and outings. They learn social rules, acceptable behavior and leadership. And the positive role models kids find in their adult counselors can have a lasting impact on their lives.

## Nature

Kids are the future stewards of our planet—yet they have fewer and fewer opportunities to be outdoors. As Richard Louv makes clear in his bestseller, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, nature must be experienced to be fully appreciated. Living in a natural setting is a defining experience of summer camp.

## Exercise

Whatever your child's shape, size or skill level, Summer Camp offers a range of activities that foster enjoyment of physical activity and counteract the effects of too much sitting and eating in our society today. It's a lot easier to get motivated to be active when exciting, new activities available in Maine's beautiful outdoors are right at your doorstep...especially if all your best friends are doing so, too!



## Activities & Play

Summer Camps offer wonderful structured activities to meet your child's individual interests, with ample time for kids to just be kids—to engage spontaneously in games, free play, discussions and plain old hanging out with each other. These occasions help children deepen their friendships and add to their social development.

## Learning

Camp provides kids with different kinds of learning from schools: they're more actively involved and more experientially engaged. Recent research has shown that 95% of science is learned outside the classroom, and summer camp offers abundant outdoors experience.

## Developing Initiative, Confidence & Leadership Skills

Summer camps are a microcosm of the larger world. They are highly participatory communities where children can safely gain confidence and stretch their evolving capacities for leadership and initiative. Often for the first time, kids experience caring adults outside their family and meet peers from outside their circle of friends. With all the ways summer camping contributes to campers' development, it's no wonder that colleges and employers look favourably on such experience as part of a well-rounded applicant's background.



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