

**DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT SUMMER CAMP**

Understand that going to summer camp is not for every child. Is your child emotionally and physically prepared to go to camp? Or is it better to find an alternative solution until your child is suitable for or interested in a camp experience? Make sure you take your child along for every camp visit. After every visit, spend time with your child to ask what (s)he liked or disliked. Do not visit only one camp, no matter what your friends or family members say. This is not about them, or even about you. This is about your child. Include your child in camp research every step of the way.

**What do you know about summer camp?**

(If they don’t know anything, describe summer camps.)

**Do your friends go to summer camp?**

**If so, what do your friends say about summer camp?**

**Do you know that there are day camps and overnight camps?**

(If they don’t know anything about each model, describe what you know, including what it’s like to be away from home for overnight camps.)

**What do you want to experience at summer camp?**

(You can describe the various activities, including everything from archery and hiking to horseback riding and swimming to theater and music to robot-building.)

**If you want to go to overnight camp, how about we do some sleepovers at Grandma’s house or your friend’s house?**

**We’re going to talk about what people can and cannot do, OK?**

(Talk about acceptable touch, consent, bullying, abuse and how to ask for help.)

**We need to talk about how to take care of yourself.**

(Discuss personal hygiene, sleep, acceptable risk.)

**Camp is not just about playing, it’s about learning too.**

(Address how camps include kids of different ages and backgrounds; being kind and accepting is as important as being confident and open to reasonable adventures.)

**What do you want to ask the camp director or counselors when
you visit the camp?**

**Let’s discuss the camp options.**

(After your visitations, review with your child what each potential camp offers. Make the discussion fun, immersive. Make a checklist of the pros and cons.)

**How many weeks do you want to attend camp?**

(And why?)