



# How to Choose a Beneficial Summer Camp For Your Children

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So the school year is almost over. Your children, and the whole family, have worked hard all year to grow, develop and meet the goals of home and school life during term time. That means that the summer vacation period is almost upon us. For some of us, that involves family vacations, relaxation with friends and family, and generally a bit of a gear shift from the hectic nature of term times.

However, for many families, the end of the school year does not signify that shift. Parents and caregivers still may have to work throughout the vacation period, and not everyone has family members who can help out with childcare.

This leads to the inevitable query of what children can do during their time out of school.

## Summer Camps for Elementary Students

Summer camps offer an excellent opportunity for elementary students to socialize, exercise, learn and spend their days in an active, stimulating environment with other children and adults. However, although most families know about the availability of summer camps, it can sometimes feel a little overwhelming when it comes to choosing which camp is best suited for your child.

This article will explore the things to look out for when it comes to choosing the most beneficial camp for your children.



## Factors to Consider

### 1. Length of Time

It is first useful to ascertain the length of time you would like to enrol your child/children in a summer camp. Once you have decided, you can begin to narrow down your search. There are summer camps of varying timeframes; from day camps to camps running the entire span of summer vacation, up to 12 weeks in length.

It is worth noting that, for younger children, separating from caregivers for a whole 12 weeks is a long period of time. Young children need to be around and check in with their family on a more regular basis. With this in mind, it is useful to know that you can enroll your child into some summer camps for only a part of the entire program, leaving flexibility for them to join only a few weeks of the program in line with your families' needs. It isn't mandatory to join for the entire program.

The aforementioned camps are, of course, overnight experiences, however for some children staying away from home for even a few days might seem a little overwhelming.

It is therefore important to explore the shorter length camp options, including day camps choices.

## 2. Areas of Interest

After the appropriate time length has been decided, you can move on to thinking about which type of camp your child would like to attend in relation to their interests.

Traditional camps offer the expected activities like hiking, swimming, team bonding games and archery, in the usual cabin and campfire setup.

There are also camps themed by sports, arts and crafts, language, specific academic subjects, technology, performance and drama, music, and religion. Choosing a camp that focuses on your child's area of interest can really elevate their enjoyment and investment in the camp.



## 3. Cost

Speaking of investment, the affordability of the summer camp is a huge factor to consider. Summer camps can be relatively expensive, especially if your child is enrolled into a 12 week program. According to an exploration of summer camp costs in the USA

by childcare site [Willie & Winton](#), generally, overnight programs can range from \$1000 to \$2500 a week, with day camps costing from \$100 to \$500 a week.

This is significant, however there are ways to save money when it comes to summer camps. If you sign up as an early bird you could save up to 25% on the total cost, and there are also a plethora of scholarship funds available to support families on lower incomes. Organizations and charities to check out include The American Camp Association, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Summer Camp Opportunities Provide an Edge (SCOPE).

#### 4. Proximity

It is also important to consider proximity to home when thinking about summer camp choices, especially if you and your children decide a day camp is the best choice. Choosing a camp that caters to your child's interests, but is a considerable distance away, may prove inconvenient if you want to pick your child up early for some reason, such as illness or a change in schedule.

Searching online is the best, most convenient way to explore all the different options, however it is always useful to shop around, talk to your child's educators and see if they have any suggestions or connections that would suit your needs.

## Inclusive Summer Camps - Accommodating Neurodivergency

Ensuring the summer camp you send your child to is inclusive, and can accommodate their needs is even more important when it comes to families with neurodivergent children.

Finding inclusive summer camps is key when seeking a space where your child can be comfortable, well supported, and have a fulfilling, fun experience. Themed camps focused on specific activities such as sports, arts and crafts or performance camps often host an inclusive camp environment with a range of facilities to ensure children with additional needs can enjoy their experience.

In these instances, it is important to do your research about the facilities available, and to talk with camp staff before making a reservation to ensure the environment aligns with what your family is looking for.

There are also specialist inclusive camps designed for children with neurodivergency and additional needs. This means they will have specially trained staff to support your child with their participation in a range of equitable and inclusive activities. Alternative

activities and modified options to activities will also be offered, to ensure a range of children can be included and enjoy themselves.



The facilities of the camp will also be accessible including paving, accommodation, restrooms and seating options that suit all participants. These facilities can include larger, multi-purpose rooms and classrooms to support more spacious learning and activities, alongside sensory breakout rooms and regulation spaces for children needing to rest or recenter.

Whilst here, your child can be fully accommodated and supported to learn important skills and knowledge that they can carry forward, as well as socialize with other children and adults on a daily basis.

## Benefits of Summer Camps

As well as providing a space for children to be well cared for whilst caregivers are working, summer camps also offer a diverse range of benefits. A huge plus point is that summer camps enable youngsters to socialize and meet new children, outside of their existing school friend circles. The importance of ongoing socialization for children and

youngsters is well researched, with Homa Warren, from the [Baylor College of Medicine](#), stating that:

“Socialization is crucial to children’s development from an early age, shaping their skills and fostering companionship and empathy. Relationships teach young children about perspective, taking turns and meaningful friendships.”



As well as aiding developmental milestones in children of all ages, camps also provide ample opportunity for children to remain active, get out in the fresh air and avoid an overload of isolated screen time.

By choosing a camp that is in line with your child’s interest, such as a performance or sports based camp, it enables them to dive deeper into something they enjoy. They can receive a tailored learning experience in a topic they are passionate or curious about, that might not be feasible at school or during term time. They can explore their interests in a less structured, non-assessed, light hearted environment, and really get to know themselves and their abilities on a deeper level.

## Enjoy Summer Vacation!

Hopefully, this article provides food for thought around the right choice of summer camp for your children, and supports your family to have a summer vacation that is beneficial

for all. If you're looking for fun and engaging learning activities for your child in summer, Kids Academy has you covered with a wide variety of [online educational resources for ages 2 to 10](#).

To find more expert advice ideas for you'r child's summer learning, check out [these articles in our parents' blog](#).

## References:

[Summer Camp Cost Guide 2024: How Much Parents Really Pay \(+ Ways to Save\) - Willieandwynton](#)

[https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.bcm.edu/news/the-importance-of-socializing-children&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1781807060299432&usg=AOvVaw0vcc2\\_2YwFfpAYcVzRG](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.bcm.edu/news/the-importance-of-socializing-children&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1781807060299432&usg=AOvVaw0vcc2_2YwFfpAYcVzRG)

