

Choosing A Safe Summer Program For Your Children



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Once the pressures of school are gone, most parents want their child to have a fun and relaxing summer. Sometimes parents look for a program that is educational; other parents look for a program that builds a special skill; still others pick a program with hours that will let the program double as childcare so parents can work. Regardless of why a program is chosen, one thing should be certain: that the camp is run in a way to keep your child safe.

Safety issues that a parent should consider include the number of children assigned to each staff member, pick-up and drop-off procedures and procedures designed to prevent child abuse.

Before enrolling a child in a summer program, these are some of the things a parent should find out:

- How is staff screened? Are references checked for all staff who have access to children, including people like custodians, aides and bus drivers?
- If the children will be picked up by a bus or van, will there be someone other than the driver to provide supervision?
- Is there a policy about picking up and dropping off children? Could anyone pick up your child without your permission?
- Are children supervised as they move about the campgrounds? If not, staff should be instructed to locate a child after 5 minutes.
- If swimming is included, how does the staff handle children who get embarrassed changing clothes in front of others?
- Is there a consistent policy about discipline? Do you agree with the policy?

A parent could find answers to these questions by interviewing the Camp Director, visiting the camp and talking to parents who have sent their children in prior years.

Summer should be a time of relaxed fun for children. Parents will be able to relax themselves when they know they have chosen a safe summer program for their children.

Compliments of: The Parenting Education Resource Center
Prevent Child Abuse – New Jersey
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1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373)
www.PreventChildAbuseNJ.org

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