

Is My Child Ready for Camp?

Every parent has to ask if her child is ready to go to an overnight camp.

Consider the following suggestions.

Begin giving your child more responsibility around the house.

By doing this you are not only teaching her the value of contributing to the family, but you will be able to see if she is responsible enough to go to camp without you. At camp children have to keep up with their belongings, manage their spending money, eat balanced meals, take showers, and brush their teeth. Going to camp will help your child become more responsible, but it must start at home prior to camp.

Work out a special situation where your child spends the night away from home at a friend's house.

This needs to be someone you trust and know well, but this will give you an idea if your child is prone to homesickness. Children who have never spent a night away from home prior to camp are more prone to homesickness while at camp.

Ask your child's teachers about her developing social skills.

Camp provides a great opportunity for your child to grow in her social interaction with other children. Her social skills will grow through cooperation games and other camp

activities. Be aware of how your child's social development is progressing so you can let the camp staff be intentional in ministering to your child in this area.

Explore the day camps in your community.

This will give you a chance to see if your child enjoys the camp environment. While it is not the same as going away to camp, it might serve as an early indicator as to the readiness of your child attending an overnight camp.

There is nothing wrong with a child missing home; however, sometimes parents are to blame for their child's miserable experience at camp.

Some parents tell their children things like, "If you get homesick, just call and I will come get you." I once heard of a mom who left notes in her child's luggage, pillow, Bible, and other belongings, so every time he put on a shirt or opened his Bible he was reminded of his mother and got homesick again. It is hard to let go and let a child grow more independent, but remember, this is important for development.

Why Send Your Kids To Church Camp?

One of the main reasons you should consider church camps is that they are specifically designed to challenge your child to grow spiritually and become better grounded in their faith.

On top of that most church camps also benefit children both emotionally and physically by offering many of the same kind of activities found at secular or specialized camp programs.

Building Character And Memories At The Same Time

A Christian camp experience can provide your child with a lifetime of positive memories and days of fun and adventure while helping to shield them from the ever present influences they face in the world today. Our kids are bombarded with messages that promote the wrong kinds of the thoughts and actions and a church based summer camp experience can be just what they need.

A week at camp can refocus and recharge their spiritual walk, and give them a strong foundation to resist the peer pressures and bad influences they'll face the rest of the year. Physical activities and a shared experience with their friends can build a strong positive attitude and change a young life for the better.

There is no certain age when a child is ready to go to an overnight camp. Each child is different. You know your child best and are the only one that can answer this question.

Ken Thomas and his wife, Norma, have two children — Nathan and Anna. Ken was instrumental in starting Centri-Kid camp (2000) and has worked with Crosspoint camps since 1991.



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