

Camping with Children



It's time to go camping!

I love to go camping! It's so much fun being in the country, sleeping under the stars and smelling nature. It is wonderful to be able to drink the smells, but the reality is that taking children to camp often can result in big changes in their lives. We take them out of everything they know and help them connect with God. There is nothing that compares it.

I made many commitments to God in camps every year, and I know that God listens to me. I had the opportunity to go camping with my Church because they rewarded me for memorizing verses from the Bible. I worked hard every year, and earned my entrance to the camp! I am so grateful for those teachers and leaders who helped me and invested in my life, those who helped me get to the camp and those who ministered to me in the camp.

I would like to encourage you to make the effort to plan an outing to nature with your class. Take them outside; and if you can, spend the night with them outside. Plan fun outings, meals and share with them about God. You know it will take effort, planning, money and discomfort. (I no longer feel ready to continue sleeping on the floor) :) But of course, you know that it is well worth doing! Just a simple advice before it starts; try to return home to most of the children he took. :)

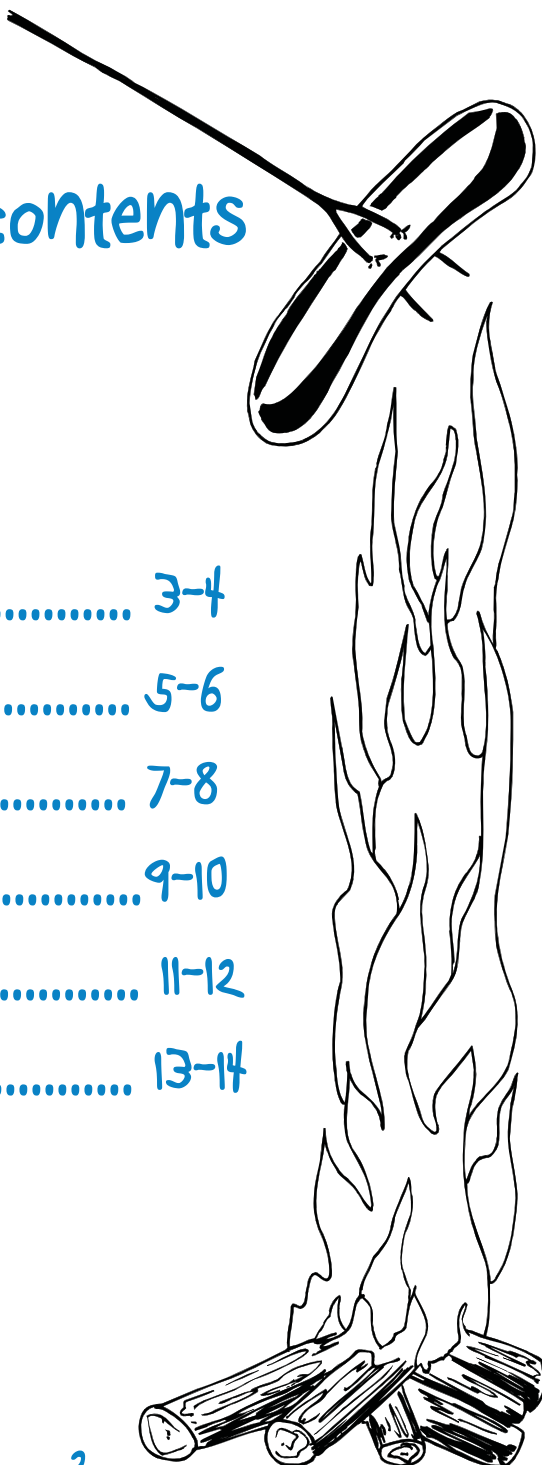


Happy Hikes,

Sister Kristina Krauss

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1. Recruiting



Invite children to the camp! “I want YOU to go to the camp with ME.” Involve others, ask them to invite all their friends to the camp as well. Ask in advance, ask often, ask everyone and ask again. A leader invited a child to camp a dozen times, and on the thirteenth time, the boy said yes, he went to the camp and there he accepted Christ, do not be rude, but do not give in. Long stretches out of

daily routines can make children more sensitive to the Lord and great changes in their lives ... so convince those children to go to the camp!

2. Leading small groups successfully in the camp

It is our job to create an atmosphere that opens children to share, talk and think. Confidentiality **MUST** be present; so remind everyone that what is said in the camp stays in the camp. Have moments to “break the ice” that will help children to get to know each other and their leader. Ask quality questions that do not have Yes or No. answers. Instead of asking “Did you have fun today?” Ask, “What was the best part of the day for you?” Most leaders talk too much when They have small groups in the camp. Let the children talk. And so that the conversations are given in a fluid way, affirm the children constantly, model your vulnerability, and answer questions with more questions! Draw types and figures of silence; try to make those who speak louder modulate your voice. When you ask a question in which you expect everyone to answer, a strategy that sometimes works is having an object that is thrown around, like a stuffed animal or a dirty sock. Any object you have on the ground. So this person will choose the next person to speak and throw the object at him or her. However, children always have the right to remain silent. They receive the object and can say “Step” and throw the object to the next person to speak. That way, they will have the opportunity to participate, but they will not be forced to participate. The more August we make the students feel, the more they will open and receive what we have prepared for them in the camp!



Leadership

3. Imparting the vision to the leaders of the camp



The group leaders in the camp are the most important part of the program. Believe it or not, everything that happens in the camp and each itinerary that exists is there to help the leaders of small groups to have

conversations with children where they are asked to consider having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. At certain times it might seem that the program directors or the master of ceremonies are the most important people in the camp. But his fame is temporary and the friendship we make with children is not. Small group leaders will go home with their students and may be in contact with them for many years. Make sure your leaders know the importance of their role in the camp.

4. Guiding a Friend to Christ

When we feel that someone is ready, it is important that leaders are ready to ask the question "Would you like to start having a personal relationship with Jesus?" Here is an example for a prayer:

"Father! What a privilege! I have someone with me who wants to introduce you. _____, your

lost son, who now comes to you! He / She has decided that living a life without you is not the

way it should be. He / she has turned around, away from your old way of thinking and living, and has begun to walk towards you heavenly Father. Thank you for forgiving him for going out of your way and living a life without you. Thank you for running to receive him while he returns home. We look forward to everything you will do with and for this child who has come home. And we know that the first thing you will do is make a great party in heaven tonight to celebrate. We will celebrate it too! Thank you again, Father, for welcoming _____ back home with open arms. We hope to know what it means for him / her to live at home with you. Amen."

After guiding someone to the Lord, maintain close contact with them, and help them articulate with others about what has happened to them. Talk to them about the possibility of sharing with everyone at the end of the week how they received Christ and how they are now Christians. Talk to them about life when they return home, and if you can, give them follow-up material or a New Testament.



5. Memory Walk

Select 10 objects that relate to the camp or hiking environment such as: A pinecone, an acorn, a stone, a long branch, a branch with spikes, a tree leaf (which has fallen naturally) a piece of wood for a bonfire, etc. - up to 10 items.

Put the items under something- a jacket, a T-shirt, or even a scarf. Then with your campers surrounding you, uncover the objects and let the children look at them for 5 to 10 seconds. Send your campers to look for objects that are identical in or around the camp or path. Set a time limit of 5 to 15 minutes. The camper or campers (the smaller campers should go in pairs, remember the security of the "Buddy System") that come back with the most objects will win.



6. Nature Walks



Allow a time for the children to go to the forest in a safe, quiet and beautiful part so they can have a time to simply contemplate the flowers, listen to the sounds, lie down on the grass, etc. Let them find something to think about for a moment and give thanks to God or talk to God about it. After a time, return and have volunteers share this experience with the rest of the group. You can also take a lunch to eat in the woods together, or you can look for animal tracks. (For more fun, leaders can leave specific clues in advance, so children can find them.)

Walks

7. Hunting Walks

Each team is given a list of things to collect from nature. All the teams have the same list. Make sure they go at least in groups of 2 and set limits in advance to how far as they can go. Here are some ideas of what you can put on the list:

- * A fruit.
- * The skeleton of a leaf.
- * Something bigger than a shoe.
- * Something soft on one side and scratchy on the other.
- * Remains of civilization.
- * Something for a gift.
- * Something thin and long.
- * An idea from the leader.
- * Very small or strange stone.



At the end, each group shows the others what they have managed to gather.

8. Whistle Walk



Have a child playing at being a fox and provided with a whistle, leave the forest a few minutes before the other children. Blow the whistle at short intervals so that others can reach it guided by the sound. The fox, every time he whistles, can be in a different direction. When the fox feels trapped, blow

the whistle until all the participants reach where he is. You can add different activities at each point that the fox is guiding you to. For example, they go to a point where they believe the fox is whistling and find an activity to be done. For example: Jump five times, say the key verse of the lesson, give candy or drinks to everyone, etc.

9. Stick planters

Children love to put sticks and twigs together. Make a rustic planter made from dry twigs, using rubber bands to hold them to an empty vase or can. Have the children gather their own branches and sticks, making sure they are longer than their vase is tall. Put 2 rubber bands around the vase and put the sticks under the rubber bands until the vase is covered. Slide the bands together and put a pretty ribbon on them. Fill the planter with wild flowers to dress up your camp food area.



10. Chalk made at home



Have your students have fun making homemade chalk easily using plaster! Each child needs a toilet paper tube, aluminum foil, a small glass and a spoon. They will also need some paint to add color to the chalk and duct tape. Have your students start the project by covering one of the edges of the toilet paper tube with duct tape. Roll a piece of aluminum foil and tuck it into the tube so that it aligns the inside and fits. Place the tube vertically (with the duct tape down) on a protected surface. In the cups, help your students mix 1 cup of plaster of Paris with half a cup of water. Mix slowly and completely until the mixture is dissolved, about 1 minute. Immediately add 2 tablespoons of paint (or more to give a stronger color to the chalk, being careful because it can stain.) Mix thoroughly. Put the spoon inside the tube and beat it slowly so that the mixture sits on the bottom. Allow it to dry overnight before use.

11. Water Bottle Handicraft

Make your own water bottles with your students for when they go out into the field. Give each student a disposable water bottle and felt fabric to decorate it. A simple decoration is to put the water bottle on top of the felt and pull the felt around the bottle and use silicone glue to glue it in place. You can reinforce the edges with needle and thread.



In the figure we show, we have also woven strips of beach fabric together to make the handle. You can use silicone glue to connect the handle and reinforce it with the needle and thread.

Crafts



12. Mailbox Crafts

Students can make their own mailboxes from a can with a lid! This way you can pass notes between each other during the camp, or receive funny notes from home, or from your camp leader. Each student can decorate his mailbox to his liking, then,

he can tie the mailbox to a tree, or put it among the branches of a tree. Let the fun begin!

13. Nature Decals

This is an easy idea. To make these “decals” just put a piece of white paper on a tree leaf or any textured thing you want like tree bark or rock surfaces. Rub a crayon or piece of chalk on the paper (you can use the homemade chalk you did earlier). High points on the surface will produce darker lines. After rubbing a bit, you will get an image of an article on paper. Children can make a collection of such “decals” while I talk with them.



14. Walking Sticks



Have your students look for the best walking stick for their walking activities. Take some time to allow them to decorate them. Bring some items to the camp to help decorate them; add yarn of various colors, feathers, or beads. Encourage your students to use things from nature such as tree leaves, vEj and unusual small sticks. They will enjoy making their walking stick, using it on walks and after they take it home!

15. Cooking with oranges



Chocolate Cake in an orange:

Cut the top of the orange - about 1/3 down. Let the children use spoons to scoop out the inside of the orange - be careful not to break or puncture the orange skin. Then prepare some cake mix.

Have the children fill their own oranges - about 2/3 full. Put the lid of the orange back and keep the orange upright. Wrap the orange in thick aluminum foil (as shown in the picture, a few layers are the best) and make a loop on the top that will help to remove the oranges from your

bed of charcoal. Put the wrapped oranges on the charcoal (do not put them in the campfire) and cover them until you have a little mountain of burning charcoal with only the loop sticking out. Approximate time to cook them is 20 - 25 minutes, but this varies, and depends on the size of the oranges and the quality of the charcoal - so check after 20 minutes to see if they are already done. Remove the charcoal and let the aluminum cool for a few minutes to be able to touch it - then let the children unwrap their own baked goodies inside an orange - and eat them!

Breakfast in an orange:

Another option is to break some eggs and beat them in a large bowl. Each student fills his orange with the egg mixture, puts the lid on it and covers it with aluminum. Cook over the charcoal. Season your orange eggs to taste!

16. Stuffed bananas

For this you need bananas, marshmallows, small pieces of chocolate, pineapple cut very thin or crushed, strawberry jelly, chopped nuts and aluminum foil. Without removing the banana skin, make a small slit in the skin and wrap the ingredients with the banana in aluminum foil. Cook them in the coals.



17. Cooked potatoes



Wrap potatoes in clay and place them on embers. You can check them with a stick or a fork. Poke the stick or fork into the potato. if it comes out clean, it is cooked.

Another way to cook them is to place them directly on the embers or around the fire, turn them over

and take care that they do not burn. Cook them in their skin.

You can also bury them: For this you make a fire in a hole and when it has heated, remove the embers. Place the potatoes in the hole and cover them with dirt. Build a fire over the covered hole to continue cooking the potatoes.

18. Sausage with bread on a stick

Prepare bread dough in advance. Students roll up the dough making small snakes and entangle them in the ground sausage. Put the mixture on a stick. Cook them in the fire until the dough is cooked. A Delicious Dinner! (Make sure you bring condiments.)



19. Shish kabobs



Cut meat into pieces and let the students put it on skewer sticks with their favorite treats. Many things make a delicious dinner like; chilies, onions, chili peppers, tomatoes and pineapples. For meat options use cut pork, chicken, or sausages (make sure they are fully cooked).

20. Roasting Marshmallows

Don't forget the honorable tradition of roasting marshmallows on a stick. Have plenty of roasting sticks ready and a good amount of hot coal around the fire. Try not to put your marshmallow on your friend's hair! Put all the sticks in a designated marshmallow stick tree to avoid problems later.



21. Have a First Aid kit



Grab a box and fill it with medical supplies so that it is ready for anything that happens in the camp.

I recommend:



*Sanitary adhesive strips or Band-Aids



*Cream for burns or Aloe Vera



*Basic medications such as aspirin or acetaminophen to reduce fever.



*Eye drops that will help if children have something in their eyes



*Tweezers to remove the splinters



*Ointment against itching, to help with mosquito bites and, of course



*Pepto-Bismol for indigestion, irritated stomach, nausea or diarrhea.

22. Take a picture of each child



Always take recent pictures of children in your camp. We hope you never have to use them for this purpose, but if a child gets lost, having recent photos of him is a great help to show around the camp, or for searches. They do not have to be physical copies of the photos -- almost any person has digital cameras already and the photo on your cell phone will serve that purpose.

Security

23. Announce camping rules

You choose the rules you want, but make sure everyone knows. Include one of these ideas: Always wear shoes, do not fight, do not eat in tents. And my favorite; Use the “Buddy” system. You do not want the campers to go exploring alone. If you can no longer see them, insist that there is an additional person with them (same sex).



24. Be VERY careful with sexual behavior



Men focus their ministry on men and women on women. Do not go out alone with a person of the opposite sex. (There is no need to walk in the woods with a camper, no matter how much he or she says he needs to talk to you.) Do not assume that others like your hugs or want you to touch them. And when hugging a person of the opposite sex, the short hugs are those that have fewer “misunderstandings.”

25. Coffee

You will not want a bunch of caffeine-deprived leaders in your camp! Have the coffee flowing for all your sleep-deprived team. This is a very important safety tip, not only for you, but also for the campers!



EXTRA EXTRA EXTRA EXTRA EXTRA

Rally

Plan a route that children take, following your directions. In each part of the rally they must find a track and carry out various activities. The winner is the one who performs the greatest number of activities or collects the largest number of clues. Each team brings their instruction sheet and a bag to hold the items. At each station there should be adults supervising. Score points and hand out a flag, certificate or other object.

Suggestions:

- * Eat an apple or donut that hangs by a string.
- * Climb a certain tree and take from it some object as proof that you really went up, (like a banner for example).
- * Jump rope a certain number of times.
- * Skip a certain distance.
- * Climb a rope ladder (you can make it look like spider's web or other fun design),
- * Bounce a ball a certain number of times while jumping on one foot.
- * Break a balloon by sitting on it on a chair.
- * Find some hidden objects inside a container filled with balloons (an inflatable pool can be used for this purpose),
- * Find some object in a plate full of flour. It can be a coin. For this, they should have their hands behind their back and take it out with their teeth.
- * Walk on a rope on the ground without losing balance.
- * Jump in a bag, like a gunny sack, a certain distance.
- * Jump between several tires placed in two rows.



Extras

How to set up a tent:

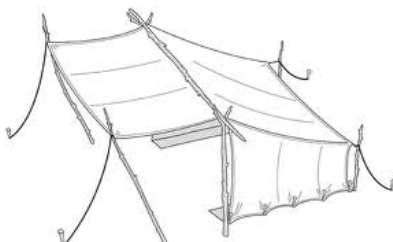


1. Take several blankets or sheets and hang them so that they remain in full size.

2. Use chairs to add support to the tent. You can also use one-bar benches, solid boards or rope tied to trees.

3. Cover the furniture with blankets or sheets. Hold the ends of the blankets with heavy books or keep them in place with the legs of the chairs. Tie the ends of the blankets to increase the area covered.

4. Put cushions inside the tent for more comfort and have fun!



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