

Summer Camp Questions to ask

Application Process:

- ✓ What is the camp schedule?
- ✓ Does the camp offer flexible schedules?
- ✓ What are the hours of operation?
- ✓ What are the camp's opening and closing dates? ✓ What is the deadline for submitting applications?

Registration and Fees:

- ✓ What is the registration fee?
- ✓ What is included in the fees e.g., transportation, meals, insurance, special trips, entrance fees, health services, use of equipment, etc.? Ask the camp director to itemize services for which additional fees are required.
- ✓ How and when are fees paid? By week, month, session?
- ✓ Are subsidies available?
- ✓ What is the refund policy if for any reason you commit and your child cannot attend the camp?

Health and Safety:

- ✓ Who licenses the camp? Is the license current?

Did you know?

Some childcare programs in Alberta "Drop" their license over the summer months. This means they are not required to follow government regulations regarding staff ratios and policies that are otherwise governed by a license.



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- ✓ What is the policy around water activities? Who supervises the children during water activities?
How does the camp accommodate children who have special needs, such as asthma, diabetes, or allergies?
- ✓ Are counselors or other camp staff required to be certified in CPR and First Aid?
- ✓ How does the summer camp handle minor injuries, such as bruises, scrapes, and cuts?
- ✓ How does the camp handle emergencies? What happens if there is an emergency and parents cannot be reached?
- ✓ If transportation is involved, what vehicles are used and how often are they inspected? Who drives the vehicles and what training do drivers have?

Staff Members:

- ✓ What is the ratio between staff and campers?
- ✓ What screening procedures are used when hiring staff members? What are their qualifications and experiences? What is the age range of the counselors?
- ✓ What background checks do counselors undergo?
- ✓ What are the Camp Director's qualifications and experience?
- ✓ Are there other staff members besides a Director and counselors? How will they interact with my child? What are their qualifications? Will they be responsible for supervising children and/or alone with children? If so, do they have a background check?
- ✓ What are the counselors' duties? Are counselors hired for short periods or for the entire summer? **Schedule:**

- ✓ What time does camp start and end each day (or session)?
- ✓ Is there an extended hours program? If so, what are the hours and cost?
- ✓ Do parents drop off directly at the camp location or somewhere else? What is the daily routine?
- ✓ What activities does the camp offer for campers in my child's age group? Do children choose activities? What are some of the activities that children find to be the most fun?

Child Supervision and Support:



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- ✓ How are children grouped? (Ask the camp to tell you specifically about your child's grouping.)
- ✓ What are the systems for keeping track of each child?
- ✓ Can siblings interact with each other during the day?
How does the camp help first time campers orient to the program? How do the counselors support children who are sad or out of sorts?
- ✓ What is the camp's approach to discipline? How are conflicts between campers resolved? What happens with serious rule infractions?
- ✓ Does the camp offer field trips? How are the children supervised on field trips? How are the children transported? Is there an option if I don't want my child to go on a certain field trip?

Parent Partnerships:

- ✓ How does the camp communicate with parents (phone, email, notes, etc.)? How do parents receive information about events and activities? How can parents contact the camp during the camp day?
- ✓ Are parents welcome at the camp anytime? Are there opportunities for parents to participate in the program? How does the camp solicit parents' opinions, ideas, suggestions, and concerns?
- ✓ Are there parents of previous campers I can contact for a reference?
- ✓ Under what circumstances will the camp call parents (i.e. minor injury, homesick, etc.)?

Environment:

- ✓ Where do the children leave their belongings?
- ✓ When do children have access to the restroom? Are male and female facilities separate for school-age children?
- ✓ Are there adequate supplies and equipment?
- ✓ Does the camp use electronics or gaming systems? If so, what are the policies regarding electronics?
- ✓ Is the environment secure to prevent children from leaving or strangers from entering?



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- ✓ Are there spaces where children can choose to relax or have quiet time?

Meals:

- ✓ Are lunches provided by the day camp? (If yes, ask for a sample menu in advance. If no, ask what guidelines they have for bag lunches.)
- ✓ Are snacks provided during the day? What kind and when?
- ✓ Are special meals available for children with allergies or special needs?
Where do the children eat?

