



Caregiver of Children News – 2/2022



Top Benefits of Summer Camp For Children

<https://www.all4kids.org/news/blog/top-benefits-of-summer-camp-for-children/>

For most of us, we look back on the seemingly endless, carefree summer days of our childhood with fondness and joy. However, now that we are parents, some of us may have mixed feelings about this season for our own kids. How will we manage childcare while working? How can we avoid the “I’m bored!” comments? Are there any educational summer activities we can get them involved in? Why is our grocery bill and electricity suddenly so much higher?

One of the best answers to these questions can be summed up in two words: SUMMER CAMP! Not only is summer camp fun, but did you know that there are a wide range of benefits of summer camp for children? Here are just a few.

Socializing and Friendship Building

One of the greatest benefits of summer camp for youth is that they get to socialize and meet new people. During summer break, kids often find it difficult to form or maintain friendships with peers their own age. Besides their siblings or cousins, most kids would say that they mainly interact with adults when they are not in school. Not only do kids develop important life skills through socializing – such as sharing, setting boundaries, and problem-solving – they also are learning how to develop strong, healthy relationships through interacting with their peers. A summer camp program provides a safe environment for children to develop social skills, decision-making skills, and maybe even experience the great outdoors. In fact, socialization during childhood may accomplish more for growth and development than reading or eating vegetables! A fun environment like summer camp is a fantastic way to encourage this in your own children, from early childhood into adolescence.

Eliminating Screen Time and Getting Exercise

In a world full of technology, sedentary-related conditions are on the rise. In fact, physical inactivity is currently the leading cause of disease and disabilities in the United States, and it all starts in childhood. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), sedentary lifestyles increase all causes of mortality, doubles the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and obesity, and increase the risks of colon cancer, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, lipid disorders, depression and anxiety – which, for the most part, are entirely preventable. While some extra creativity to get your kids active and limit screen time at home during the summer is often required, summer camp is a perfect solution. Most of these programs are situated in the great outdoors and offer a number of physical activities for the children to partake in. Not only will the kids get out of the house and have some fun, but they are sure to get some solid exercise in as well – from activities such as hiking to archery, horseback riding, swimming, zip-lining, and team sports. Allowing your kids to explore the outdoors and interact with new children is an excellent way to broaden their perspective and experience a whole new world for their summer break.

Personal Growth, Learning, and Development

Most summer camps focus on a theme, or incorporate aspects of learning, exploring, character building, and personal growth. If you are looking for fun summer activities for your children, there are many different camp types to consider, such as sports camp, cooking camps, art camps, science camps and many more. You can be certain that your child will not only be entertained, but also educated and challenged. While they are having fun and exploring their own interests, they are also increasing their own capacities for learning, teamwork, problem solving, knowledge, and self-awareness. In fact, studies have shown that, of families who send their kids to summer camp, 70 percent of parents report that their child gained self-confidence while at camp. A strong sense of self is so important, and this is only one of the many ways that attending summer camp can positively impact your son or daughter. Learning about themselves and the world outside of the traditional classroom environment can do wonders for their growth and development.



This program is supported by Senior Resources – Agency on Aging with Title III funds made available under the Older American’s Act.

Positive Role Models

Another benefit of summer camp is that it provides your child with the opportunity to interact with positive adult role models. Typically, camp counselors are younger adults who are choosing to volunteer or working part-time over their own summer break from college. Not only are these counselors energetic, but kids see them as “cool” and often a little more relatable than their own parents. This can be a tremendous asset in the lives of your children (and yours). Sometimes, it helps kids to see what their own lives could look like in just a few short years and, if the “cool camp counselor” has integrity and a good character, your child is likely to emulate them, too. It also gives our child or [teenager a sense of community](#) while working with others. The formation of these role model relationships can help kids to develop the confidence, self-esteem, and skills they need to be successful in school and in life. Overall, the more healthy, positive adult relationships that a child or youth has in their life, the more likely they are to thrive in all areas, long after summer camp has ended.

Making Memories

Many adults would say that some of their fondest memories were those sunny, summer camp experiences as they were growing up. Unfortunately, kids today are missing out on some of the simplicity of life before the technological era. While times have certainly changed and there is tremendous value in that, there is nothing quite like preserving those simple, unplugged, childhood memories. Aside from gaining decision-making skills, leadership skills, and social skills at a summer program, they also get plenty of physical activity as well!. Yes, your child may miss their phone, tablet, or gaming system at first, but once they start exploring, interacting with their peers, engaging in a variety of activities, and having new adventures, they are sure to leave summer camp with stories, photographs, friendships, life lessons, and memories that will last a lifetime.

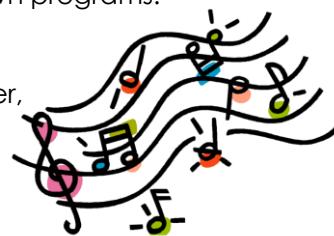
Planning for Summer 2022?? Check out these resources!!

<https://portal.ct.gov/Services/Education/K-12-Education/Summer-Programs>



1. **Camping** – The state provides a list of day, sleep-away and specialty camps that are sports, music, art and science themed.
2. **ConneCT Kids Programs** – KIDS: Summer Planning – Parents can find summer programs for children, including day and sleep-away camps, summer jobs, volunteer opportunities and town programs.

3. **Special Needs Programs** – Parents can find a list of summer programs throughout the state that serve youngsters with special needs.
4. **Summer Programs by Category** – For kids who want a more focused summer, the state has a list of camps that specialize in arts and music, academics, the environment, history, technology and sports.
5. **Summer Trips and Fun** – Parents in the mood for seasonal indoor or outdoor activities can find links to museums, places to swim and other destinations.
6. **Youth Work Programs** – Teens and young adults can search for summer jobs with companies, towns and agencies.



We hope you find the February edition of our Caregiver of Children newsletter informative.

Senior Resources currently produces a monthly caregiver of children newsletter. We are looking for feedback on any ideas you may have for future editions.

Please contact Robin Brewer with any ideas/suggestions or if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

Robin Brewer: RBrewer@seniorresourcec.org or 860 887-3561 x 124.

To read previous editions of this newsletter please visit:

www.SeniorResourcesEC.org/stay-informed/grandparent-newsletter

SUPPORT GROUPS



GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN - Resource groups in Senior Resources' service area
(Please call individual contacts to confirm information)

Groton Human Services:

Contact: Diane Schrage (860) 441-6760
Where: Groton Public Library/52 Newtown Road/Groton
When: First Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm

Old Saybrook Youth & Family:

Contact: Linda Knightly (860) 395-3190
Where: Old Saybrook Youth & Family/322 Main St./Old Saybrook
When: Last Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm

Senior Resources:

Contact: Robin Brewer (860) 887-3561 ext. 124
Where: Rose City Senior Center/8 Mahan Drive/Norwich
When: Last Tuesday of the month at 9:00 am (Except May & Dec.)

Town of Cromwell:

Contact: Katelynn Puorro, LMSW (860) 632-3448
Where: Cromwell Senior Center/41 West Street/Cromwell
When: Second Thursday of the month at 12:00 pm

Town of Mansfield:

Contact: Janit Romayko (860) 569-1978
Where: Big Y Mansfield/141 Storrs Road/Mansfield Center
When: Second Wednesday of the month at 9:15 a.m.

United Services (2 Groups):

Contact: Lori Bergstrom (860) 412 - 8665
Where: United Services/303 Putnam Road/Wauregan
When: Second Tuesday of the month
Where: United Services/140 N Frontage Road/Mansfield Center
When: Third Wednesday of the month

Waterford Country School:

Contact: (860) 265-6302
Where: SAFE Home/947 Vauxhall Street Ext./Waterford
When: First Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm