Educating the Whole Child
What is Camp?

“A sustained experience which provides a creative, recreational and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of-doors. It utilizes training leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper’s mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth.”

(American Camp Association, 1998)
A Changing Definition

With current research, the definition has broadened to be more inclusive. The essentials are:

• Education
• Trained leadership
• Individual growth
• Character development
• Fun
Camps operate on 6 continents

- There are various names for camp: Camp education, summer camp, youth development, children’s rest, outdoor education, vacation plans, or holiday schemes.

- Facilities and appearance differ between countries and programs.

- In some countries, the camp industry is well established, while in others it is in various stages of development.
• The camp movement began in 1861 in North America.

• Camp associations exist in 14 countries.

• It is estimated that there are programs known as camps in at least 100 countries.
Camp is vital to the development and education of the whole child.

There should be year-round educational opportunities for all children.
Camp provides:

• Healthy, developmentally appropriate activities and learning experiences
• Discovery through experiential education
• Caring, competent role models
• Service to the community and the environment
• Opportunities for leadership and personal growth
• Opportunities for children to learn and practice the English language
• Cultural awareness
Research has shown that:
Camp prepares children to assume roles as successful adults.

Children show growth in these areas:
- Self confidence
- Independence
- Making friends
- Exploring and learning new activities
- Spirituality
Reported by children:

- 96% - Camp helped me make new friends
- 93% - Camp helped me to get to know kids who are different than me
- 92% - The people at camp helped me feel good about myself
- 74% - At camp I did things I was afraid to do at home
Reported by parents:

- 70% - My child gained self-confidence at camp
- 63% - My child continues to participate in some of the new activities he learned at camp
- 69% - My child remains in contact with friends made at camp
What camp programs are available for international families?

- Partnership agencies
- Exchange programs
- Direct contact with a camp:
How can you locate a camp for your child?

American Camp Association
find.acacamps.org

International Camping Fellowship
(Listing of camps and organizations)
campingfellowship.org
Considerations

- Is my child ready for camp?
- Age – usually at least 8 for an international camp experience
- Has your child had overnight experiences away from home?
- Interest – how did your child become interested in camp?
- What does your child expect to do at camp?
Typical Accommodations in North American Camps
Food choices may be different than in your home country.
Typical Activities in North American Camps
Questions to ask:

- What activities are offered?
- What are the living arrangements?
- What is the camp’s philosophy and program emphasis?
- How are the counselors trained?
- Counselor-to-camper ratio?
  1:6 for children ages 7-8
  1:8 for children ages 9-14
- What are the ages of the counselors?
- How does the camp handle special needs?
- References from other parents
- Accreditation, certification or government oversight
Conclusion

- Start early to select several possible programs for consideration
- Involve your child in the process
- Talk to other parents who have had a positive experience
- Begin communicating directly with the partnership agency or the camp to assure that your questions are answered and your child is prepared
Educating the Whole Child

Camp education around the world

www.campingfellowship.org