


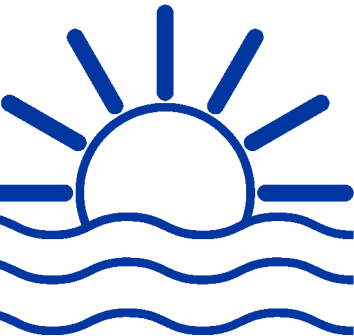






Selecting the Right Summer Camp

Are you and your children ready for summer camp? Remember, do your homework and ask questions prior to enrolling your children in any summer program; make an onsite visit if possible.





Questions for Camp Directors and Program Staff:

-  *How do you think about child safety? Do they mention child sexual or physical abuse and their prevention/intervention policies? Do they understand their responsibility to protect children from abuse?*
-  *Does the organization do criminal and Child Protective Services background checks on all employees and volunteers? Do they require and check several references for employees? This includes everyone who may interact with your child (maintenance, janitors, kitchen staff, etc.).*
-  *What is the organization's employee conduct policy? Ask for a copy and read it carefully, looking for gaps. For example, does it contain restrictions prohibiting employees from giving gifts to campers? Does the policy tell the employee to avoid private one-on-one interactions with campers? Does it require for there to be two unrelated adults in charge of kids? Who is responsible for enforcing camp policies?*



-  *Is there abuse prevention training provided to all staff, including camp counselors who may be youth themselves?*
-  *What is the organization's visitor policy? Can you visit and observe activities at any time?*
-  *What are the age ranges of campers? Does the camp monitor interactions between older and younger youth?*
-  *What is the staff-to-camper ratio? Is it appropriate for the age groups? If it's a licensed facility, the ratio requirements should be posted.*

Here are some things to consider:

-  **Observe how adults work with your children.** Ask your child and camp staff about daily activities and if you are concerned about anyone's behavior, discuss your concerns immediately with program directors.
-  **Talk with your children about safety.** Encourage them to tell you or another trusted adult if anyone or anything makes them feel uncomfortable. Teach them it is okay to tell you what happened and remind them they will not be tattletales.
-  **Stay alert, informed and focused on personal-security issues.** Being available and taking time to know and listen to your children helps build feelings of safety and security. Be sure children know what to do in case of an emergency and how to reach you.
-  **If you are not satisfied with the answers you are given, it's a red flag.** You may want to obtain additional information or check out other camp options before making a decision.



**Take our online assessment at
www.pcaky.org for additional
guidelines on choosing safe
caregivers.**

1.800.CHILDREN

*A free, confidential information
and support helpline*



**Prevent Child Abuse
Kentucky™**

www.pcaky.org



801 Corporate Drive, Suite 120
Lexington, Kentucky 40503
(859)225-8879

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