

9. Is the camp registered?

All camps that take preschool age children must have their camp registered with the Department of Environmental Health. Camps wishing to be given a future seal of approval should also be registered and striving to meet best practice standards and keep children safe.

10. What are your policies on visitors and communicating your concerns?

Parents should ensure that there is a method for making sure that unauthorized visitors are not allowed access to their child. It's also important for the camps to account for attendance and dismissal from camps. Parents should have a plan in place designating how the child is to leave the camp, including the names of those that have permission to visit or escort their child home. In addition, you should also feel comfortable knowing who to lodge a concern or grievance with.

- How does the camp screen visitors?
- If I have a concern to whom would I address it with?



Knowledge is power!

Check List ✓

- 1. Where is the camp located?
- 2. Who are the staff operating the camp?
- 3. What is the camp's philosophy and program emphasis?
- 4. What is the camp's behaviour and disciplinary policies?
- 5. What is the counselor-to-camper ratio?
- 6. What are the transportation and excursion policies?
- 7. What is your water safety policy?
- 8. What is the true cost of the camp?
- 9. Is the camp registered?
- 10. What are your policies on visitors and communicating your concerns?



In collaboration with
The Department of Child and Family Services,
The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation,
The Family Centre,
Coalition for the Protection of Children,
Environmental Health and
The Child Development Programme

For more information visit us on:
Facebook @Safe Camps Bermuda
and Environmental Health at www.gov.bm

TOP 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD ASK BEFORE SENDING YOUR CHILD TO CAMP



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Community, Culture and Sports
Department of Child and Family Services



Its summer time and children just want to have fun!

Parents, before you send your child to any camp in Bermuda you want to make sure that they are safe, supervised and engaged in activities that keep their minds and bodies active.

The following questions are **TOP 10 questions and additional questions** for parents to ask before you register your child for camp:

1. Where is the camp located?

- All programmes should meet established guidelines for indoor space, free from hazards, in good condition and meet environmental health standards.
- Is there a suitable and safe building/structure for the camp's base?

2. Who are the staff operating the camp?

- At a minimum, camp staff should be trained in safety regulations, emergency procedures, communications, behavior management techniques and child physical and sexual abuse prevention and reporting.
- Are the camp staff CPR/First Aid trained?
- Are medical forms about the campers collected; how are medications stored?
- Do you conduct background checks on your staff?

3. What is the camp's philosophy and program emphasis?

- The camp's program/activities should be age and developmentally appropriate for the children they serve.
- What does a typical day look like for the camper, what does the camp focus on?
- How many hours are spent inside and how many outside in the sun?
- Are the campers oriented to the camp and to systems put in place to keep campers safe?

4. What is the camp's behaviour and disciplinary policies?

- Parents or guardians need to be assured that they will be contacted in the case of problematic behaviour becoming a safety issue for the child or others?
- What are the rules and consequences?
- How do they use positive reinforcement?
- Is there a policy on bullying?
- How is behavior managed?

5. What is the counselor-to-camper ratio?

- The ratios and maximum group size vary according to age and activity (see the suggested ratios posted on the Safe Camps Bermuda Facebook page and Environmental Health's website, outlined in the Guidelines for Camp Operators).
- The US based guidelines on day camp staff to child ratio is that there must be one senior counselor for every six children under the age of six; one for every nine children between the ages of six and seven and one for every 12 children who are eight years old and above.

6. What are the transportation and excursion policies?

- Parents should be notified in advance of any excursions or field trips planned for the children.
- Does the camp provide transportation? If yes, is it via pre-organized vans or buses?
- What are the conditions of the vans i.e.; seatbelts and driver experience, if bus, what are the checks and balances to ensure safety?
- What is the contact number of a camp staff person that I can reach at all times even when campers are on excursions?

7. What is your water safety policy?

Children should not be permitted near water without supervision and a staff member who is First Aid-certified and familiar with lifesaving procedures. All campers' swimming ability should be assessed and activities designed according to skill level of each child.



8. What is the true cost of the camp?

- What does the camp fee include?
- Are there other expenses?
- Will outside activities cost extra?
- Is there a refund policy?