

Safe Camping



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How to Plan a Camping Trip with Children

Whether you are planning a trip to the beach or a quick trip to the grocery store, children inevitably add an extra layer of planning and preparation, and a family camping trip is no different. If the idea of being away from civilization for a day or two leaves you feeling a little nervous, check out these tips for planning a camping trip you and your kids will be sure to enjoy.

Before You Go

If this will be your first time camping with children in tow, consider practicing at home before tackling the real deal. [Backyard camping](#) is a great way to give everyone a little camping experience, and will help you to gauge whether or not your child would be able to handle camping in the great outdoors. To ramp up the excitement, let your child pick out a sleeping bag with their favorite character and choose their favorite snacks. A good [camping tip](#) is to take a

trial run at a nearby lake or park before attempting an overnigher. You can use this time to write down reminders based on your experience such as packing more sunscreen or bringing long pants to keep away evening bug bites.

Speaking of [packing](#), keep the kids involved by letting them pack their own duffel bag (which will be double-checked by you of course). Let your child bring their favorite toys or stuffed animals to make the environment feel more comfortable and avoid a nighttime freak out when you realize you left Mr. Bear at home. To add to the comfort, choose a campground that fits your needs and skills. For example, if this is your first time camping, you may want certain amenities such as bathrooms, showers, or pre-pitched tents.

We're Here

Upon arriving at the campsite, have a family [safety meeting](#). Walk around the campsite and establish boundaries using identifiable landmarks. If you have young children, bring along colored rope or ribbon to mark the boundary line. It is imperative that you review proper fire safety. Children should remain at a safe distance from the fire, and never put anything in it without adult supervision. Use long forks to reiterate the necessity of staying back from the fire. For extra security, give children a whistle to wear around their neck. Should they get lost or separated, instruct your child to blow the whistle three times. Return their call with a single whistle blow to let them know you are on your way.

Once safety has been addressed, it's time to start the fun. [Camping with kids](#) means keeping them busy to keep the boredom at bay. During downtime at the campsite, play fun board games or get up and moving with a rousing game of Duck Duck Goose or ultimate Frisbee. One of the most common camping activities is hiking, and it is a great way to explore the surrounding area and discover amazing sites. To avoid worried stares from your children as you realize you are lost, plan ahead by picking out a hiking trail or destination. If hiking is a little too hardcore, have a nature safari in and around your campsite. The good news is that this fun outdoor activity can be turned into a [backyard safari](#) for those days when you are searching for a way to pull your kids away from the television without leaving home.

Camping can be a fun experience, but like any trip, sometimes things just don't go as planned and that is totally okay. The key is to create memories with your children, whether that is the torrential downpour that soaked everyone or the group of deer you spotted on your hike. Prepare as best you can and enjoy the fun.

Thank you!