

Why Should You Send Your Children to Camp?

Includes excerpts from Camping Magazine Nov/Dec 2011 issue,

*Article titled: **Why the World Needs Summer Camp An Essay to Parents***

We all know economic times are hard, we hear it on the news, on the streets, in our homes, from family and friends, and we see it in print nearly every day. We are always on the look-out for a better way to invest our money. Dollar for dollar, there is no better return on our money than investing it in our children and youth. As our Church is fond of saying, "Our Children and Youth are the future of our Church." They are our Church. If we are not willing to invest our time and monies in teaching our children and youth to be independent and caring individuals, what does that bode for the future of our Church and community?

Sending our children and youth to summer camp is one way we can show them they are worth that investment. It is a place where they get reacquainted with old friends and make new friends from all over the world and from different economic backgrounds. They make new memories that last a lifetime in a safe and loving environment. Some of my daughter's closest and oldest friends are those she met at Camp. They live all over the country. She talks on the phone, chats on Facebook, emails and texts with someone she met at Camp nearly every day. These are the relationships that help our children and youth build character by encouraging them to look outside of themselves. Camp teaches them to be more tolerant of others ideas and beliefs; to work together in cooperation and trust.

Our children and youth are so busy these days. Camp is a place they can get away from the pressure of achievement and the buzz of electronics. It is a place where they are allowed to just be kids for awhile and play just for the sake of playing. They have the opportunity to express themselves by participating in the drama of Aslan's country during Narnia Camp, playing Quidditch or meeting an owl during Harry Potter week, building up their courage and confidence white-water rafting on the Rio Grande, and working as a team on the Camp's ropes course. "Camps give kids a chance to practice being the best they can be. They experience a place designed to create happy memories and encourage self-expression." "Kids learn from a full range of emotions and human experiences including homesickness, friendships, disagreements, team work, frustrations, jubilant success, and more." "Our hopes and jobs are to ready our kids to be productive, independent, and capable people – to prepare them to thrive without us. Camp offers a way for kids to start developing those skills in the best possible environment."

"Camp is a gift we can give our children that they will benefit from and remember forever. If ever there was a time when the world needed a generation of future leaders who understood the intricacies of living in a community, having tolerance, and being open – that time is now." I encourage you to send your kids to Camp this summer, maybe even come yourselves and bring your whole family to Alumni/Family Camp, or make a donation that will allow another child to experience all that camp has to offer. I hope to see you and your kids at one of our camp sessions this summer.

As we say in Hawaii, A hui hou kahou malama pono, and Ke Akua hoomaikai oe; `Till then, take care and God bless you.

Beryl Zimmerman