Summer Camp

Summer camp is a great experience -- offering an opportunity to meet new people, learn new things and really test what we're made of. We asked a couple of veteran campers what they liked best about camp, and here are their answers.

I'm Not Alone Anymore By Evan Nimmer

When my mom and dad first told me about the camp I said, "No it's just going to be like all other camps where the kids always ask me, 'Why are you so hyper?'" I really didn't believe that I was like other kids until I saw the video. Once I saw that even a counselor said he had AD/HD, I started to think that it might not be so bad. I made a video of myself, sent it in, and was accepted into the camp. At that time, I still had my doubts and decided to go for only three weeks. Once I got there everything was normal, but in my gut I had a feeling that it was a regular camp. I felt this way until I met the camp director, Dave. Dave was nice, and I started to realize that this was a camp that understood kids like me. He could tell that I couldn't help all of it, and that made me feel more comfortable.

The camp, as I found out, has so many interesting things to offer. One of the most amazing things is that they have nice bathrooms and are probably one of the only camps with WARM SHOWERS!!!!! One of my favorite things to do is go on the obstacle course. I feel confident doing this with others because I know that the others around me also have disabilities and experience the same problems and feelings that I have. This relationship also helped me make friends more easily. Friends weren't the only people there you could trust though. The nurses and Dr. Ron and Dr. Lillian were probably the most reliable people when it comes to giving medicine on time. I knew then that I would have a wonderful time.

I think that summer camps like this are fun, and camp did a lot to boost my confidence. I think that summer camps are a great idea, and my life sure wouldn't be the same without them. I get to make new friends, learn new things, and overall have fun without kids constantly wondering why I sometimes act so strange. I'm at a camp now that can understand me and appreciate the difficulties I've had at other places where I didn't have the "best time of my life." That's why I keep going back. So I personally say that I think camps are a great idea and a great way to boost self-confidence. It sure helped my life; maybe it can help yours.

Summer Camp By Tony Sandoz, age 12

From Niger in West Africa, and now from Rome, in Italy, I've been going back to the same camp every year since 1995.

I look forward to it every year because of the water skiing, kayaking, wall climbing and high adventure facilities. There are other fun things to do like stained glass, swimming, canoeing, horse back riding and go-carts. There, I can be myself without taking Ritalin, I

can gain weight and I can meet my old friends. It is also a way of going back to my roots and my country since my parents work for the UN and we move every two or three years.

During my first three years, we were more or less treated like kids; now that we are growing up, we are treated like equals, and that I like.

This summer I wanted to learn German, just for fun. So, during academics (where kids can catch up on their schooling) I had private German lessons! I am nowhere near fluent, but still, I have a baseÉcamp rules! Amazing that they happened to have a counselor that spoke German!!

Thank you for these five years of fun!!

Life at Summer Camp By Morgan Charbonneau

I would have to say that attending camp every summer is a highlight of my year. Last summer was my third time. The first summer, when I was 10 years old, was difficult for me, but I still had a good time. I found it overwhelming as I had never been away from my family before, and I was going to spend three weeks where I did not know a soul. The second summer, I wanted to go back but I was still nervous to go. After that second summer though, I looked forward to returning from the day I left camp. Next summer, I would like to go for the full seven weeks, but can only go for four weeks because of a family vacation.

For any kid thinking of going to camp, I can assure you that it will change your life as you know it! Camp has made me much surer of myself. I will always at least try things now instead of saying no right away. I have learned skills which I never thought I could do, and get along much better with kids my own age. The staff is always praising and encouraging you. They are funny and really understand you.

My favorite activities at camp now are horseback riding, archery, the high ropes course and dances. There are many other things to do at camp such as tennis, water-skiing, windsurfing, baseball, go-carting and video production.

There are usually about seven campers in your bunk and three counselors. The kids at camp are friendlier and have a better sense of humor than the kids in my school. The cabins are very comfortable with bunk beds, a washroom with a shower and lots of places to put your stuff. You become like one family with your bunkmates and counselors.

A typical day at camp includes waking up at 7 a.m., cleaning up, then having bunk inspection. Then you have breakfast and academics (ugh!). Next is first and second period which are planned activities with one other cabin. Then it is lunchtime. The meals are good, but far too many vegetables! After lunch is rest time, where you can read or play your Nintendo as long as you are quiet. Next is general swim unless you are scheduled for horseback riding or water-skiing. Milk and cookies are next, then third

period which is another planned activity with your bunk. Choice period follows that. Every week you get to choose three activities, ranking them in order of what you want to do most. If one week you do not get your first choice then the next week you are guaranteed your first choice. Next is mail call, followed by supper.

After supper it's free play then the evening activity. Believe it or not, one of the best times of the day is bedtime! Every night there is a bunk meeting where you discuss your day and hear the merit announcements that praise people for being nice or doing something extraordinary that day. After a snack of fruit, a counselor will read from a book, then it is time for lights out.

All in all, I love camp and highly recommend it to any kid who is looking for a good time.

What I Learned at Summer Camp By Various Camp Experts

I learned to work on improving my relations with my peers to avoid social problems. DF

I can be really responsible if I need to be. WR

That I can do anything that I commit myself to. JB

I learned that I could lead. JL

That I do have good qualities. CP

That I can do it!

I learned that I could succeed in almost anything if I try with all of my might. SB

I'm a better leader than I thought. ML

I gained respect for my strengths and stamina. JW

I learned that being you isn't a bad thing at all, because if they don't like you for who you are then they aren't your friends. CA

I like to help others learn to do things that I have fun doing. DR

I learned that I could be more organized than I already am. NH

I learned that I could make friends easily; I just need to get to know the kids. JS

I like adventure activities and camping. EF

I am capable of trying new experiences and succeeding in facing my fears. I had fun at camp cause I made a lot of new friends. JM

I can do a lot more things that I thought I could do, especially mountain climbing. AW I can do anything I set my mind to. MD

I learned I could do much more than I ever thought I could. KR

That I can help kids and I'm good at it. CM

I can walk 11 miles in 3 days, climb rocks as tall as a 2-story building, and go on a raft in white water for 7 miles. JG

I learned that the things I didn't want to do were ok after I did them. I learned you were a little braver than you thought you were. SK

When you brush llamas you can take hair off. AB

Hearned self-confidence, TBC

I learned that I'm not afraid to try new things. KS

I learned to set goals instead of limits. JP

That I am a good leader. JM
That I can do anything if I put my mind to it. JC
I learned that I am a fun person when I am happy. JC
I learned that the harder I push myself the farther I go. And that I have more fun when I don't worry so much and just let things fly. KE
That if you try and fail, try again, you're bound to suggested!! ST

That if you try and fail--try again--you're bound to succeed!!! ST If I make up my mind that I can do something, usually I can! JS