



**Dear WFB:** Our third grader has been talking excitedly about going to daycamp this summer. Neither my husband nor I ever went to camp, and we have no idea how to pick out a camp for her. Do you have any tips?

**Dear First-Time Day Camp Parent:**

Here are a few things we suggest parents think about...



- **Type of camp.** Are you looking for a general camp program that offers a mixture of activities – including arts, music, sports and games? Do you want there to be swimming or swim instruction? Are you interested in a camp program that focuses on a particular sport (like football, basketball, tennis, or baseball), or a special interest or talent that your child has or wants to develop (drama, music, art, nature, outdoor skills)?
- **Length of Camp.** How long do you want your child to attend camp – for one or two weeks, a month, or the whole summer? How many days per week? Does there need to be care before and after camp to match your working hours?
- **Location of Camp.** Do you want camp to be within a certain distance of your home or work? Can you drop off and pick up or do you need a camp that offers transportation (usually for an extra fee)?
- **Cost of Camp.** What's your budget? Camp costs run the gamut from free or subsidized community programs to pricey private or specialty camps. Sleepaway camps are more expensive than daycamps. Where you live will have an effect on the "going rates" for camps, and availability of different types of camp programs.
- **"Camp-like Options."** There may be local childcare centers that provide only pre-school child care during the school year, and then become daycamps for pre-school **and** school-aged kids for the summer months. Such centers shift their focus, curriculum, and activities to make their programs fun and constructive for a variety of ages during June, July and August. Particularly in parts of the country where there are not many camps, childcare centers often become an alternative for summer care.

Think about these factors and then call Work & Family Benefits: one of our experienced counselors will guide you through all the considerations – cost, distance, type of program, and more – so you can make the happiest decision for you and your little camper! Note: summer programs fill up quickly, so the sooner you call us, the better!