



Woodmen Summer Camp Guide

CHOOSING A CAMP

Consider safety, counselors when selecting summer adventure spot for your family



Arianne VanDerWege and her daughter

ARIANNE VANDERWEGE

Each summer, kids across the country head off to summer camp to enjoy the outdoors, meet potential lifelong friends and embark on new adventures. There are all kinds of camp out there; day camp, sleepaway, traditional,

specialty, and more. With so many camps to choose from, finding the right experience for your child can seem overwhelming. But with a little research, finding a meaningful summer experience is not as difficult as you might think.

Safety comes first: when selecting a camp, make sure that it is properly licensed. In Colorado, camps are licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services and, with some exceptions, camps should hold a current license. Requirements of licensing include background checks for staff, staff training, making sure the camp facility is in good repair, and procedures for emergencies. Camps can also be accredited by the American Camp Association. ACA is the educational, professional development and accrediting organization for the

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camp industry. Camps that volunteer to be accredited by the ACA are reviewed on over 300 standards, which are recognized as industry best practices. In addition to safety, standards address the camp's philosophy, and program design and quality.

Activities at camp are important, but the camp's philosophy, goals and outcomes are even more significant. Good camps offer fun and interesting activities. Great camps offer activities designed to build campers' independence, teamwork and problem-solving skills. Recently, the ACA joined the

Partnership for 21st Century Learning, a coalition whose goal is to help children to be successful in their personal and academic lives, and as citizens of their community. Whether the focus is on innovation, leadership or community, a camp that has goals for outcomes for its campers provides a more meaningful experience for campers and their families.

Quality camp staff is also key. Counselors keep kids safe, help them develop friendships, teach new skills, and foster a sense of community. They act as mentors and friends and should be well trained. They should maintain CPR, first aid and activity specific certifications and have had training specific to the camp. The camp's counselor-to-camper ratio and type of training the staff have are important considerations. You can also get a

good sense of what a camp is about by contacting the camp director. A good director understands the investment and trust that you are placing in them by choosing their camp, will answer your questions, and might be able to provide references from their current or past camp families.

Whether it's a traditional day camp, sleepaway camp or specialty camp, there are great camp experiences awaiting your child this summer. With a little bit of research you can set your child up for the best possible experience. A summer of taking in the outdoors, making friends and new adventures is just a few short months away.

Arianne VanDerWege is Owner/Director of Go West Camps, which helps kids discover the wonders and adventure of exploring their own backyards. For more information, visit gowestcamps.org.

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 at Colorado College

We're located on the beautiful campus of Colorado College, utilizing many campus facilities including Taylor Theater, dining hall, ice rink, swimming pool and outdoor spaces.

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 (Space is limited, sign up today!)
June 6 through August 5, 2016 ~ 9 Weekly Sessions
 Sign up for all 9 or pick & choose!

Registration form available at www.coloradocollege.edu
 (Put FunQuest in the search box.) Registration fee is \$60. Discounts may apply. For non-CC campus families the weekly tuition rate is \$210; for campus families \$190. This includes: two snacks, hot lunch at the dining hall or a pack lunch on field trip day, all field trip venue fees and other camp expenses. (\$6 extra for skating)

Contact camp coordinator Chris Warfield for questions or more information at cwarfield@coloradocollege.edu