



3 QUESTIONS EVERY PARENT NEEDS TO ANSWER BEFORE CHOOSING SUMMER CHILD CARE

Camp of Champions USA || 2016

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SUMMER.

That means three months away from school, free from homework, projects, and parent-teacher conferences. But it also means different routines, crazy schedules, and figuring out what your kids will do for three whole months!

There are a lot of options out there for summer child care - park districts, day care services, summer camps, sports camps, college for kids, and even a stay-at-home babysitter. All of these have their pros and cons, so how do you choose between them? Here's the three most important questions every parent needs to answer before choosing summer child care.

1. WILL MY CHILD HAVE FUN?

It might seem obvious, but fun is important! Find somewhere that your child will enjoy spending their summer. It should make your kid jump out of bed in the

morning. If your son or daughter comes home complaining about how bored they were that day, you'll have a headache that lasts until school starts again.

Fun is important to your child's development. Fun helps your child grow socially by breaking down barriers to building relationships and making friends. At Camp of Champions USA, we've seen firsthand that kids who have fun together can develop close friendships. Fun also helps your child grow physically. Activities like playing games and making crafts help your child to develop their coordination and skills. Fun is also important in helping your child develop emotionally. Playing fair, learning to abide by the rules, and interacting with other kids develops empathy, self-awareness, and compassion for others. Fun is so much more than simply having a good time.

2. WILL MY CHILD BE SAFE?

Fun is important, but it doesn't mean much if your child isn't safe. A safe environment is not built on catch phrases and quick fixes. Safety is built over time and proven by results. From time to time at every organization, accidents will happen and poor decisions will be made (we're all human, after all). However, an organization committed to providing safe child care will be relentless in preventing, identifying, and correcting danger of any kind.

It's surprising how many parents assume that any person who takes care of kids will keep them safe. Sadly, this isn't true. Many organizations simply cross their fingers and hope for the best. The statistics on child abuse* are frightening, especially considering that 90% of all child sexual abuse victims know their abuser. Since

*Check out these statistics here.

we were kids, we've all been taught about "stranger danger." However, strangers are not the real problem. Acquaintances with too much freedom and too little accountability are much more likely to abuse a child than a stranger. Choose summer child care that has specific policies in place to identify and remove potential child abusers. Look at their track-record to see how they've prevented and/or dealt with situations of abuse in the past.

3. WILL IT HAVE A POSITIVE, LASTING IMPACT ON MY CHILD?

Most of your choices for child care will give your kid a fun-filled summer, no doubt about it. Many of them will also proactively keep your child safe. However, very few of your options for summer child care offer a positive, lasting impact for your child. Basketball camp may help them improve their free-throw percentage.

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College for kids may teach them a new skill. An overnight summer camp might give them some new friends and a few nostalgic memories. But will these places truly help your child grow into the person you want them to be?

As a parent, the place you choose for summer child care should help your family thrive. It should help you in teaching your kids how to serve and lead others. It should reinforce the positive character qualities you're building into them. It should partner with you to set your kids up for lifelong success. Don't settle for the most convenient option, or even the short-term success option. Choose summer child care that will partner with you as a parent to achieve the goals you have for your child.

MAKE YOUR SUMMER COUNT.

Now that you've answered these three questions, you know what to look for as you choose summer child care. At Camp of Champions USA, we want to help you make your summer count. Our program is built on **fun** for everyone, **safety** for every child from physical and emotional harm, and Gospel-centered discipleship that will make a **positive, lasting impact** on your child's life. You might answer these three important questions and realize that COCUSA isn't for your family, and that's ok. We hope that whether you choose to send your child to Camp or not, you'll now be able to make an informed decision when it comes to summer child care.

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