

Do-it-yourself Neighborhood Camp



Inside this eBook:

Ideas for a Neighbor-led Summer Camp where everyone shares the work for a fraction of the cost

Suggestions for fun and creative ways to keep your kids busy during the summer months

Tips for getting along and getting everyone involved!



A FREE VolunteerSpot eBook

Please feel free to post this eBook on your blog or email it to whomever you believe would benefit from reading it.

THANK YOU!

~ Team VolunteerSpot

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VolunteerSpot Philosophy

At VolunteerSpot, we believe that volunteers should be rewarded for sharing their time and talents with those in need. Often, volunteering means dealing with a certain amount of hassle or frustration in the form of late night emails, reply-all messages, reminder phone calls, or searching for a parking space. Our sponsors enable us to provide FREE tools that simplify volunteering. We can't find you a parking space, but with VolunteerSpot, DOING GOOD just got easier!



Summer Camp at Home!

VolunteerSpot understands the need for family fun and keeping the kids active during the summer months at a low cost. We've come up with some ideas to turn your neighborhood into an inexpensive and enjoyable camp for everyone!

We hope this eBook will spark ideas for joining parents and kids together -- helping everyone have a great time and share in the fun!



Making it Happen

Why a Neighborhood Camp?	page 5
Save Time with VolunteerSpot	page 6
Camp Themes	page 7
Destination Outdoor Fun!	page 8
Host a Scavenger Hunt	page 9
Giggle Guaranteed Activities	page 10
Fun with Fitness	page 11
Pet Play	page 12
Putting the Fun in Fundraisers	page 13
Organizing Field Trips	page 14
Places to Go	page 15
Classic Attractions	page 16
Getting out in the Green	page 17
Top 10 Craft Ideas	page 18
Camper Checklist	page 19
Ground Rules and Safety	page 20



Why a Neighborhood Camp?

Cost: Putting together a neighborhood camp is more cost effective than sending kids to day camp or hiring a babysitter. Working parents can rotate a full or half-day camp shift, reducing time away from work.

Social development: Getting to know and work with your neighbors can help build community and lasting relationships for both kids and adults.

Exposure to new experiences: Each family has something unique they can share with others.

Rest: One day of dedicated supervision as the 'leader' earns you several more days of peace.

Unplug from electronics: Neighborhood camps gets kids involved in the real world and helps them learn to have fun and be successful apart from a screen.

More fun than sitting at home: The more the merrier!

Crafts make great gifts: Plan for relatives' birthdays and seasonal decorations for family and friends.

Hear about how well your kids behave with other parents: When exposed to a new social setting your kids might surprise you, for the better!

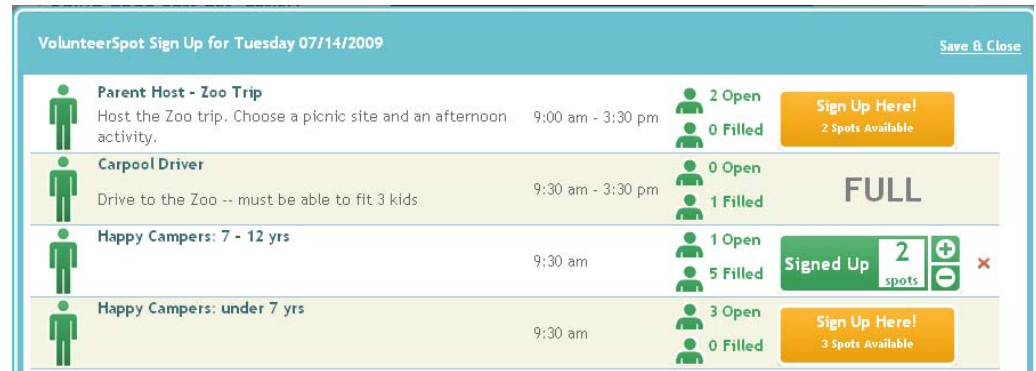
Smiling faces & tired kids: No summer is complete without them!

Organizing a neighborhood camp is simple and easy with VolunteerSpot! Plan yours today at www.VolunteerSpot.com

Save Time, Plan your Camp Online with VolunteerSpot



Example: Week View



Example: Day View

VolunteerSpot's simple online signup tool makes it easy to coordinate with neighbors.

Once parents have signed up to host and picked spots for campers, VolunteerSpot sends automated confirmations and reminders to help everyone keep their commitments.



Camp Themes

Themes can inspire a lot of enthusiasm and creativity for your neighborhood camp. If there is a particular TV show, game, book or movie several neighborhood kids are interested in, consider hosting a camp day based on that theme. Let kids vote on their favorites. Mix it up, including both fun and educational activities.

Theme Ideas:

Pirates
Hollywood
1950s
Future/Space
Wizards
Rock Stars
Olympics/Sports
Knights
Old West
Tropical Beach
Jungle Safari



Children can:

Dress up as their favorite character, celebrity, or sports player

Participate in Trivia games based on information only fans would know

Make food that relates to the theme

Choose a movie or game that fits with the theme

Reenact favorite scenes or moments

Destination Outdoor Fun!

- **Organize a bike parade:** make streamers and tissue paper flowers to decorate bicycles and scooters
- **Kite or Frisbee Festival:** create and decorate kites, Frisbees or flying objects of all kinds
- **Chalk Gallery:** draw works of art in the driveway or playground and invite neighbors to attend the exhibition
- **Sports Tournament:** On each driveway, host a game, such as basketball, four square, tetherball, and Red Rover and alternate areas every 15 minutes between groups of kids

RAIN PLANS

Options for Indoor Fun

- Dance Party
- Cookie/Cake Decorating
- Box & Blanket Village
- Board-Game Tournament
- Cup Stacking Contest
- Art Gallery & Showcase
- Wax Museum - Dress up & Pose

Host a Scavenger Hunt

Make a list of items to be found in your neighborhood, local park, or city. Use a digital camera to capture larger items. Divide everyone into teams and set a time limit to find as many items as possible on the list.

Scavenger Hunt Examples:

Bus schedule

Mural

Picture of a school mascot

Picture of a colorful bird

Shopping bag from a local mall

Funny bumper sticker

Picture of a baby's foot

Picture of a dog's nose

Shiny rocks, shells, etc.

A leaf bigger than your hand



Giggle Guaranteed Activities

Trading Station – Ask children go through their closets and collect toys and books they would like to trade. Setup blanket ‘shops’ on a lawn so they can trade and barter for their items. Parents should decide if the kids are allowed to buy items with money or just trade for other items.



Water Balloon Dodge Ball– This game requires a lot of room, but is always a favorite! Let the kids help prepare for the game by making plenty of water balloons. Then block off a corner of the park or yard and let loose!

Around the World Without Leaving Home – Each family prepares a foreign culture experience by decorating their home and preparing an activity. This can include food, dance, music, games, rituals, or storytelling.

Talent Show – Host a talent show for the parents. Children can perform solo or in teams. Invite friends and family and follow up with a picnic or barbeque. For ideas, see our free eBook, [Talent Shows for Fun and Fundraising](#).

Fun with Fitness

Ask one or two parents to sign up to host work-out sessions for your campers. The sessions should last 30 minutes to an hour with a warm up and cool down stretch.

Possible Session Ideas:

Aerobics

Karate

Yoga

Jump rope

Jogging

Swim fit

Dancing

Roller skating

Weightlifting

Hula hooping

Bike riding

Household items such as unopened soup or soda cans can be used as weights to keep costs down. Just make sure they fit the child's hand for a firm grasp to avoid muscle strain.



Pet Play

- Gather friendly neighborhood pets for a pet parade or a dog wash!
- Not enough pets in the neighborhood? Wash, walk, or play with animals at a local animal shelter. Call ahead to make sure the local shelter is willing to participate.
- Have the older children volunteer to offer 'pet duty' for the elderly in the neighborhood such as walking dogs and cleaning out litter boxes and cages.



Putting the Fun in Fundraisers

Although footing the bill for camp may be out of the picture for many families, a trip out of town for a day can be made possible by hosting a neighborhood fundraiser and splitting the profits or combining them for a group trip. Here are some classic ideas for kid-friendly fundraisers in your neighborhood.



Car wash – Make sure all the children are old enough not to run in front of cars. Have them make signs and volunteer to wash cars.

Lemonade Stand – Bake cookies, make pretzels and mix up some fresh lemonade and people will flock to your “store” for a sweet or salty treat, and a lemonade to wash it down. Keep prices affordable and split the cost of supplies to make this very profitable.

Yard sale – Kids can sell their gently used treasures and crafts. If there is not a place in your neighborhood, ask a local church or business if their parking lot is available.

Organizing Field Trips

Field Trips are a great way to keep kids' minds engaged during the summer and help them continue their learning outside of the classroom. Some cities will have more places to visit than others, but every community has something to offer kids.



Signup Drivers & Chaperones With VolunteerSpot, parents easily take turns planning and hosting day trips. Each driver should have proof of insurance, a first aid kit, and fire extinguisher in the car.

Choose the destination Not all children will want to visit each place, and some may be limited by entry fees. Let the campers vote and try to find a location that pleases everyone.

Pack Essentials Have each parent equip their child with a travel pack filled with food, water, fees, emergency contacts and insurance information, sunscreen, and anything else the child may need while they are out.

Places to Go

Zoo – If your city or town has a local zoo, be sure to check it out. Kids love learning about animals and seeing them up close. Be sure to have enough parent volunteers to keep track of all the kids.

Park – Explore different parks in your community. The park is a great place for kids to run around and use up their energy!

Museum – The local museum is a great place for kids to learn about history, culture, geography, science and more! If your area does not have a museum, consider planning a day trip to the nearest town or University that has one.

Library – Libraries often have events during the summer where kids can participate in reading circles, plays, and dress up days. Contact your local library to see what activities they offer and schedule the days parents are available that coincide with the library's events.

Don't live near a zoo? Visit a farm and learn where grocery store items come from. Some farms have stables. Call ahead to arrange stable visits or pony rides.



Classic Attractions

If the neighborhood kids have raised or saved enough money, here are some fun summer adventures.

Miniature Golf: A large windmill or dinosaur keeps it fun and fresh

Go-Carts: Kids may not have their license but they can still drive

Water Amusement Parks: Cool off with a visit to a water park or special public pool

Baseball Games: Go cheer your local team – high school, AAA, or professional

Video Arcade: Many local communities have establishments offering arcade games and pizza



Getting Out in the Green

- Visit a County Park, State Park, or Nature Center and go on a hike or camping trip to discover plants, birds, bugs, etc.
- If you can't go on a camping trip, recreate a campsite and have a cook out, complete with tents and flashlights in your backyard.
- Have a picnic at a park, lake, beach, or backyard.
- Take a day trip and visit a botanical garden.
- Have the kids perform acts of service for the neighborhood by offering to replant, repot, or uproot landscaping plants for the residents.



Top Ten Craft Ideas

1. Sock Puppets
2. Jewelry Making (bracelets or necklaces)
3. Decorate door hangers
4. Grow a plant (decorate the pot)
5. Decorate a memory box
6. Paper hats (crowns, pirate hats, etc.)
7. Pipe cleaner people
8. Rock Pets or shell pets (with googley eyes)
9. Key chains (beaded or lanyard)
10. Decorate picture frames



Camper Checklist

Before dropping off your kid(s) with a neighbor, be sure that they have everything needed for a fun day. Having your kid(s) well prepared will inspire others to do the same when it's your turn to host.

- filled water bottle
- sunscreen
- hat and sunglasses
- bug spray
- snack and/or lunch
- swim suit and towel
- car booster seat
- book or magazine
- bike helmet
- emergency contacts
- insurance information



Ground Rules & Safety

Neighborhood Camp can be as formal or informal as you and your neighbors are collectively comfortable with. Making agreements ahead of time can prevent conflict and accidents.

Agree to Ground Rules – Discuss and document important agreements such as supervision ratios, acceptable snacks, access to TV and video games, pool safety, reading time/nap time, discipline methods, and use of helmets and booster seats.

Safety Considerations – Do your neighbors have firearms in the house? Are they secure? Do you want to require background checks of hosts? Do carpool drivers have adequate insurance? Are homes, yards and pets kid-safe? Are parents CPR trained and First-Aid certified?

Set Expectations – Talk to children about what behavior is required and what consequences to expect if ground rules are broken. Set incentives for good behavior.



Thank You!

Thank you for downloading this **FREE**
eBook from **VolunteerSpot**.

We take the hassle out of organizing
groups and make it point-and-click
simple to schedule all your activities
with our **FREE** powerful real-time
calendar sign up tool.

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have to say! If you:**

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