

HELPFUL HINTS FOR COUNSELORS: WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE'S "NOTHING TO DO":

What do you do when there's "nothing to do"? Certainly, there are the daily routines and the regularly scheduled activity times, but there are also times when the weather forces us to change our plans. There are "free" periods, and there are days when something new and different is called for. Such times can be disconcerting if we are unprepared. What will you do tomorrow if: it's too cold to go swimming... it's too hot to play soccer... there's no wind to sail... there's a mix-up in scheduling?

Here are some ideas that you can use, or vary to suit the needs of your campers, to keep them challenged, enthusiastic and excited about camp life. If you are properly prepared, these ideas may help to make what would otherwise be an ordinary day into something special.

CABIN PROJECTS

- * Have a contest to see who can wear the most clothes.
- * Play games in the lake or pool, e.g. water football, Frisbee or water polo.
- * Have the camp medic or nurse come to the cabin to help campers practice First Aid.
- * Have a tongue twister contest.
- * Make a plaque or painting you can leave behind in your cabin with all the campers' names on it.
- * Play baseball (using a mush ball) or volleyball in the rain wearing just bathing suits and no shoes.
- * Play "Twenty Questions" first determining whether the object is "animal", vegetable, or mineral".
- * Play "Who are you"? – Pin the name of a famous person on each camper's back and, using only "yes" or "no" answers, have them determine who the person is.
- * Play hockey using ping-pong balls and pencils.
- * Play "Add On" – everyone stands in a circle, and one person performs an action (e.g. clapping their hands). The next person claps hands and "adds on" an action (e.g. jumping as high as possible), and so on. If a player must retire from the game until another game starts.
- * Play floor or field hockey.
- * Create designs in the sand or mud.
- * Have a riddle or joke contest.
- * Organize a cabin or camp wide fishing contest in or out of the rain.
- * Go collecting for the camp museum.
- * Dress up for dinner in some wild costumes.
- * Have a "Trivia Pursuit" contest within the cabin group or section.
- * Have a Frisbee throwing context.
- * Write a camp newspaper.
- * Search for animals' tracks in the mud.
- * Build a terrarium.
- * Set up a weather station.
- * Build a raft in a secret place down the shore.

- * Have a "Treasure Hunt".
- * Make forts in the cabin out of blankets and ground sheets.
- * Play card games.
- * Play board games.
- * Have each camper write a letter home.
- * Create a band, making your own instruments.
- * Play game of balloon volleyball between the cabin rafters.
- * Start a "Cabin Log" which can be kept by your cabin group and then added to by succeeding groups.

PROJECTS INVOLVING OTHER CAMP GROUPS

- * Plan a rain dance you can do in front of the camp.
- * Have a contest with other cabins to see who can do the best job painting **the counselors' bodies.
- * Set up a tug-of-war in or out of the rain.
- * Have a Christmas party with tree, carols, presents, and a dinner.
- * Make up a Trivia contest for the camp, having each cabin submit some questions.
- * Organize a band to tour through camp and wake up everyone before breakfast.
- * Challenge another cabin to a contest.
- * Have your campers be waiters to a special group for a meal.
- * Organize a race e.g. a three-legged, sack, or balloon-blowing race.
- * Set up a Ping-Pong tetherball or horseshoe tournament.
- * Organize fire-starting contest (rain or shine).
- * Plan and execute an indoor carnival for your section or the whole camp.

NIGHT TIME PROJECTS

- * Plan some games using flashlights – hide and seek, kick the can, etc...
- * Hold scavenger or treasure hunts with flashlights.
- * Have a popcorn roast.
- * Take your cabin group to an isolated hill or point of land where you can observe the sunset