

No Baths at Camp

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{ What's Special About Camp? }

Growth and Fun All in One

Kids everywhere agree — going to camp is awesome! Camp is one-stop shopping for a unique, “unplugged” growth experience, with physical activities and games, creative arts, appreciation of nature, and participation in a community environment. For many kids, overnight camp may be their first time sleeping away from home and being on their own. They’ll learn independence, responsibility, and how to make their own choices. They’ll make new friends and learn to work together with kids from different backgrounds. And having fun is a requirement! Camp may even help kids appreciate the comforts of home: family members, their own bed, their belongings...but maybe not the bathtub. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/nobathsatcamp.

The Great Outdoors

Spending regular time outdoors is good for everyone, regardless of age — but maybe especially for kids. The outdoors is an open playroom, filled with endless opportunities for exploration and investigation. The beauty of nature sparks kids’ (and parents’) sense of wonder about the world, which is an essential Jewish experience. In the words of a traditional daily prayer: “How great are your works, God, in wisdom you have made all of them. The Earth is filled with your creations.” Appreciating the natural world is another way of appreciating the divine.

A Change of Pace

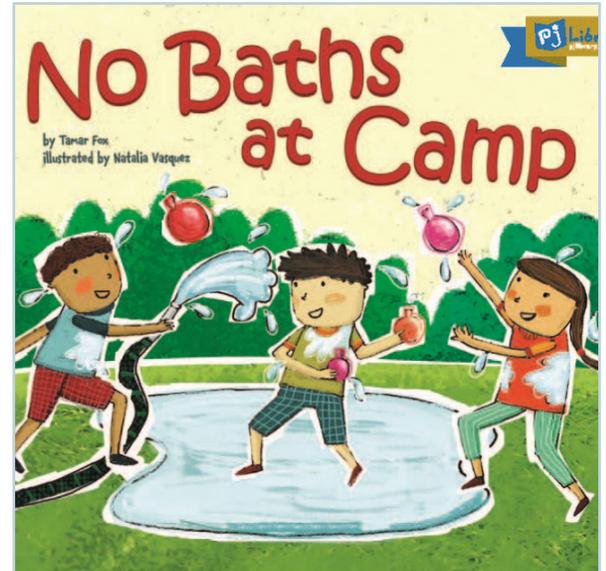
On Fridays, Max and his camp friends prepare (and shower!) for something special: *Shabbat*. Shabbat is the Jewish Sabbath, or day of rest, that takes place every week from Friday evening to Saturday evening. On this day, work stops, and the focus and pace of life change. Many families enjoy special meals, attend synagogue services, and relax together by going for walks, reading, or napping in the afternoon. Even away from home, Max and his fellow campers do lots of things that set Shabbat aside as a unique day. At the end of Shabbat, the campers make a brief ceremony called *Havdalah*, which means “separation” in Hebrew. The items used — wine or grape juice, spices, and a braided candle — connect us to the sweetness of Shabbat for a few more moments before we say goodbye and prepare to begin a new week.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

If you’ve been to camp, what did you like best about it? If you haven’t gone yet, what do you think it would be like to go to camp?

When you’re away from home, what things do you enjoy? What things do you miss?

What special things does your family do on Shabbat?

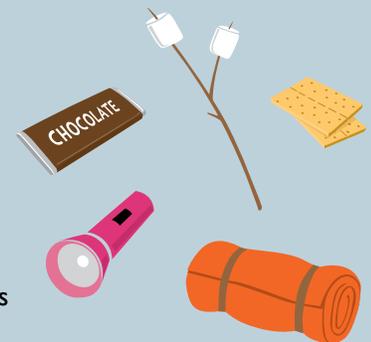


HANDS ON!

Backyard or Living Room Campout

Supplies

Sleeping bags
Pillows
Tent (optional)
Flashlight
Marshmallows
Chocolate bars
Graham crackers



When you aren’t at camp, camp can come to you! Make your own family campout in your backyard or living room. Feel free to invite friends, too! Set up sleeping bags, pillows, and a tent if you wish, get cozy, and break out your best songs and stories. Toast marshmallows over a backyard fire if you have one, or simply use the stove or microwave, and enjoy making s’mores (or any other favorite treat). When everyone gets sleepy, simply jump into your ready-made beds. See you in the morning!