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“RAIN, RAIN IS ON ITS WAY” What’s happening at your camp?

The following are some things to consider as you work to improve your program on rainy days at camp.

EVALUATE: Take the time to take a **CRITICAL** and **OBJECTIVE** look at your rainy day program and schedules. What’s working and what’s not? Why and why not?

LOOK FOR USABLE SPACE: Take a look around camp for any space where you could fit a group of children and their counselors. Do you have a storage room that is filled with junk? Could you put that stuff in a rented storage shed for the summer? Would a large table and benches fit into the space? Could you carpet the area? Do you have a porch or room that can be divided? If a camp has “bunks”...staying in them with no quality program can also be deadly.



CONSIDER ADDING SPACES: Tents set on wooden platforms, concrete slabs or stoned areas, awnings off of existing buildings, teepees, hogans, small barns, a roof or tent over an existing program area such as gymnastics, hockey, etc.

HAVE A RAINY DAY SCHEDULE: This may seem like a strange statement! However, many camps do not have a detailed plan. It is necessary to have a rainy day schedule before orientation. When rain starts to fall, there’s really nothing worse than sitting around waiting for the people in charge to change plans, or even worse, make plans. All staff, directors, program heads, counselors and specialists, need to know ahead of time what will happen, who will be in charge and what their specific responsibilities will be.



BE PREPARED: DO YOUR PLANNING AHEAD OF TIME! After you plan your schedule, it’s time to prepare for what’s to happen. Develop the schedules for each group, prepare them for inclusion in the staff manual and to use at training sessions, post them in “bunks” and specialty areas, let the staff know what they are responsible for and what to prepare, follow through to see that they are prepared, make purchases, package them and arrange to store the prepared items until they are needed, know how the items get “checked-out” and have a plan to restock/clean items. Have another plan to add more ideas and “stuff” if it’s a long, rainy summer!



PACKAGE YOUR PLANS: Look around camp for that closet or room or add a small shed with shelves to “house” your rainy day items. Use plastic shoe boxes, milk crates, “apartment grocery carts”, duffel bags, mesh athletic bags, stuff sacks, ziplock bags, baskets, backpacks, pitchers, etc. to organize stuff. Label it and list contents so that they’ll know what they are suppose to return.



INCLUDE YOUR STAFF IN THE PLANS: Ask people from all levels of your staff to be involved in the planning and prep work! They have great ideas and people “out-in-the-trenches” know first hand the problems that they encounter during rain. Also, people who have ownership in the plans, usually are more enthusiastic about carrying out the activities. Many education and recreation majors have had classes to prepare them to teach and they have exciting activities to share. They are usually waiting for someone to ask them for their suggestions! Remember to thank them!

