

Theme: Camping

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

- Let children help you set up a tent—either outdoors or indoors (with a sheet over some furniture).
- March around singing camping songs!
- Play musical chairs and put campfire-shaped cutouts on the chairs.
- Play a version of duck-duck-goose and say “raccoon, raccoon, BEAR!” instead!
- Do “Let’s Go on a Bear Hunt” at circle time!
- Play “Hot Potato” with a black bean bag that represents a hot piece of coal!

Math Activities:

- Count the bears, tents, backpacks, etc., on the flannel board.
- Play a game of “Concentration” and have the children match pictures of camping equipment. You can cut these out of a catalog or print some off the internet.
- Play “Bingo” with camping clipart you’ve used to make Bingo cards.
- Count the insects you collect in the science activity.

Science Activities:

- Talk about the history of fire and what we use fire for. Demonstrate the proper way to put out a camp fire.
- Collect bugs in an appropriate container; let the children observe them, then turn the bugs loose outdoors at the end of the day.
- Talk about shadows and how they are made. Turn out the lights, sit under an indoor “tent” and make shadow figures with your hands!
- Talk about the melting process as you make S’mores!

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- ✓ At the sand and water table, put toy bears, tents, trees, and small camping gear and lincoln logs for children to set up a pretend campground.
- ✓ Puzzles
- ✓ Construction games – logs, blocks, etc.
- ✓ Shapes – moon, stars, sun, trees, pine cones

Snacks:

- ✓ Make S’mores!
- ✓ Have hotdogs and chips for lunch! Be sure to cut hotdogs into bite-size pieces for young children.
- ✓ Baked beans
- ✓ Stone Soup (read the book about Stone Soup on the day you serve this treat!)
- ✓ Ants-on-a-Log (cut a 3” length of celery, fill with peanut butter or ranch dip, add raisins on top to look like “ants”)
- ✓ Make sandwiches and have a picnic!

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

On Friday, let the children bring their own sleeping bags or bed rolls for naptime! They can also bring a favorite story book and have a “read-in”.

Songs & Fingerplays: See fingerplay cards.

Books:

Amelia Bedelia Goes Camping/P. Parish
A Camping Spree with Mr. Magee/C. Van Dusen
Fred and Ted Go Camping/P. Eastman
Maisy Goes Camping/L. Cousins
Henry and Mudge and the Starry Night/C. Rylant
Berenstain Bears & the Ghost of the Forest/S. & J. Berenstain
Blazing Ahead!/J. Scott
Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe/V. B. Williams
When We Go Camping/M. Ruurs
Tiny Goes Camping/C. Meister

Curious George Goes Camping/M. Rey
Bailey Goes Camping/K. Henkes
Arthur Goes to Camp/M. Brown
A Day at Camp, Vol. 2/M. Mayer
Arthur's Camp-Out/L. Hoban
Sleeping in a Sack/L. White
Camping/N. Hundal
Caillou Goes Camping/R. Harvey
The Night Before Summer Camp/N. Wing

Dramatic Play:

This one's easy! Pull out some camping gear and let the children pretend they're going on a real camping trip! Serve a picnic lunch or beans and franks for lunch.

Art:

- Put together a camping scene on construction paper. Let the children glue on pictures of tents, trees, camping gear, camp fires, etc., that have been cut out of magazines, old catalogs, etc.
- Let the children paint a picture of their ideal camping spot! Or a picture of the place their family goes camping.
- Have the children cut out giant-sized crescent moons, paint them with glue, and decorate with glitter. Hang the moons around the room or on a bulletin board to dry.
- Let the children decorate cardboard "tents" with scrap pieces of green fabric. They can use the tents to play creatively in the block play area, with supervision.
- Children can paint a giant cardboard tent (large sheet of cardboard folded in half, or half a large cardboard box) for outdoor dramatic play.

Circle Time Activities:

- Introduce children to equipment used for camping. Tell why you use each item, how to handle it correctly, and any safety features.
- Let the children tell about their favorite camping trip, if they've been on one.
- Let the children make up a story, as a group, while you draw the representation of the story on a big piece of poster paper... then let the children color their story!
- "C" is for camping.... What things in the room can you find that start with the "ka" sound?
- What kind of animals might we see on a camping trip? Show pictures to the children and discuss interesting facts about those animals.
- What would we do on a camping trip for fun? This is a good time to make S'mores with the kids....
- Read some of the books listed above and ask the children, "Do you think that could really happen?" Why or why not? Let children analyze the story and tell what they liked about it, what they didn't like, how they think the story should have ended, etc.