

### **Why an ACA-Accredited Camp?**

ACA Accreditation means that your child's camp cares enough to undergo a thorough (up to 300 standards) review of its operation — from staff qualifications and training to emergency management. American Camp Association collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to assure that current practices at your child's camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation. Camps and ACA form a partnership that promotes growth and fun in an environment committed to safety.

ACA helps member camps provide:

- Healthy, developmentally appropriate activities and learning experiences
- Discovery through experiential education
- Caring, competent role models
- Service to the community and the environment
- Opportunities for leadership and personal growth



Answers to Parents' Most Frequently Asked Questions About Camp Accreditation

### **What's the difference between state licensing of camps and accreditation by ACA?**

Accreditation is voluntary and ACA accreditation assures families that camps have made the commitment to a safe, nurturing environment for their children. If a state requires licensing, it is mandatory; licensing requirements vary from state to state. ACA standards are recognized by courts of law and government regulators as the standards of the camp community.

### **How do ACA standards exceed state licensing requirements?**

ACA goes beyond basic requirements for health, cleanliness, and food service into specific areas of programming, including camp staff from director through counselors, emergency management plans, health care, and management. ACA applies separate standards for activities such as waterfront, horseback riding, and adventure and travel.

### **What are some of the ACA standards that camps rely on?**

- Staff to camper ratios are appropriate for different age groups
- Goals for camp activities are developmentally based
- Emergency transportation available at all times
- First-aid facilities and trained staff available when campers are present

### **Does ACA accreditation require criminal background checks?**

ACA accreditation standards require a staff screening system which may include criminal background checks where permitted by law. When talking to a camp director as you consider enrolling your child, ask what the screening process for that camp includes.

### **How can I verify that my child's camp is ACA accredited?**

Parents can (and should) verify the accreditation status of any camp at any time by visiting ACA's Web site at [www.ACAcamps.org](http://www.ACAcamps.org) or by calling 1-800-428-CAMP.