Countless skills can be learned or enhanced during a club campout. Everything currently being offered in the 4-H program (from auto safety to woodworking) can be a part of a campout.

Certain skills are best learned in the outdoors. Fun activities like hiking, swimming, and campcraft create an awareness of the outdoors and help to promote wise use of natural resources. Club camping also offers an ideal laboratory for human development. It's a "learning by living" growth experience where young people can develop leadership, learn to get along with others, and increase their self-confidence.

To help your campers gain the most from a campout experience, consider the following.

CAMPING WITH A PURPOSE

Each of us has a different reason for going on a campout...like making new friends or learning some new skills. If you have your group decide on a purpose for the campout, you then can choose activities that will help you meet your goal.

For example, if your club's objective is to make new friends, plan activities that will mix the members in several different groups. If your group wants to learn new skills, plan a program that exposes them to a variety of outdoor recreation activities.

GOOD PLANNING

Thorough preparation is the key to a successful campout. Answer the following questions as you plan for your outing:

WHO?

This question means more than just identifying who will take part and what they know how to do. Who also includes the people who will supervise and supervision is a must. In some clubs the leader is in charge, and he or she uses other adults as additional help. But club parents with camping skill can also serve as campout leaders.

A standard rule is a minimum of two chaperones per youth group. The second adult can take charge in case one leader is busy with a camp activity or a first aid problem. The American Camping Association recommends at least one adult for every six youth 10 years or younger, and one chaperone for every 10 campers older than 10 years.

Chaperones selected for leading club camping outings should have mature judgment, enjoy working with youth, and have training or experience in group camping.

Possible sources of help are parents of club members, older brothers and sisters, teachers, college students, clergy, or neighbors. Be sure to ask them well in advance of your campout and be as specific as possible about their responsibilities during camp.

WHEN AND WHERE?

Once the chaperones are selected, choose a campout date and time when most of your group can attend. It's best to let the entire group take part in deciding where to camp. After you select your campsite, find out about reservations and regulations (such as fire rules, trash handling, etc.)
WHAT?
You and your campers should plan activities based on your purpose and the resources available at the camp site. If your campers have no experience in some activities you have planned, it's important to practice these prior to the camp. Some basic skills to think about include menu planning, fire building, preparing food outdoors, clean-up, pitching a tent, packing a back pack, or fixing a bed roll. An outdoor meal in your back yard will probably give your group enough experience to let them know what to expect on the campout.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

FOOD
Food can be handled in many ways:
—Eat before coming.
—Bring a sack meal.
—Prepare a standard menu and ask the campers to bring their own ingredients (breakfast example: instant oatmeal, instant drink, piece of fruit, hot chocolate).
—Have a committee plan menus, buy food, gather cooking equipment, and make assignments for cooking clean-up.

If this is your group's first cookout:
1) Keep it simple (one-pot meal like chili).
2) Plan a meal with short cooking time.
3) Be sure the meal is filling.
4) Practice at home.
5) Make plans for what to do in case of bad weather.

What about meal cost? A rule-of-thumb is $1 per person per meal.

FIRST AID AND PERMISSION SLIPS
A first aid kit (basic bandages, etc.) is a must if you're not close to home. A kit can easily be prepared to fit in a lunch box and carried with your group. Another essential item is a permission slip signed by the camper's parents or guardian. The form should include the camper's home phone and a statement that gives leaders permission to give emergency first aid.

Another idea is to give one club parent a list of all campers and phone numbers to be called in case the group will be returning late. Parents also like to know the camp location and nearest phone (such as the park ranger's office).

TRANSPORTATION
Arrange car pools or ask parents to drop children off and pick them up at the site at pre-arranged times. Club members could use their own transportation (such as bikes or walking) if the distance isn't too great.

INSURANCE
It would be wise to obtain a special insurance policy for any outing or field trip. The County Extension Office probably has forms the group can use, or you can contact a local insurance company. This will cost $.10 to $.25 per day per person.

EQUIPMENT
Make a list of equipment needed for recreation (softball, bats, frisbees), cookouts (pots, pans, etc.), or service projects (litter bags). Someone (or a committee) should be in charge of gathering and returning equipment.

BAD WEATHER
In case of bad weather, make arrangements with campers to either cancel the event or come dressed for the weather. This means alternatives must be planned for rain bursts in middle of cookouts and program activities. It isn't hard to be ready if your outing was well planned.

RULES
Leaders and club officers should set the pattern for the group. Before your campout, discuss rules required by the site owners and expected behavior rules. Allow members to suggest other rules. This may prevent some problems from occurring. It also gives the leaders some leverage if they have to deal with a problem during the event.

CAMP RULES

COST
Estimate cost for the outing. Consider insurance, transportation (if car pool drivers will be reimbursed), equipment rental, food, site use fee, etc. If the group feels the cost is too high they have two choices—(1) find a cheaper way or event or (2) have a fund raising event (bake sale, mow yards) well in advance of the outing.
PROGRAM
Allow all participants to help plan the agenda for the outing. Plan a variety of activities and plan for more activities than you'll actually need (flexibility is the key). Be ready to lengthen a particular activity (craft, singing, etc.) a few minutes if your group wants to spend more time, or stop and switch to a different activity if the group becomes bored. The leader doesn't have to lead all activities. Parents, program people, or members can be asked to lead portions of the day's events.

Sample 24 hour camp program might include:
Car pool depart school
Arrive camp and settle in
Hike & scavenger hunt (collect campfire wood)
Recreation—skits & stunts, get acquainted games
Snacks
Campfire program & evening thoughts
Cabin time
Bird walk or early riser swim
Cook breakfast
Make a craft
Learn first aid
Lash a camp table
Prepare lunch
Canoeing
Service project to site
Fix dinner
Evaluation and camp clean up
Depart

SAFETY AND SANITATION
Safety is more than taking along a first aid kit. Campers need to know how to identify camp hazards such as poisonous plants and animals, and they should know emergency procedures for a tornado or in case of a lost camper.
Sanitary procedures also need to be planned. Should the trash be burned or carried out? Should

BIBLIOGRAPHY
(All are available in paperback)
Hammett, Catherine. Your Own Book of Camp Craft
Pocket Books, 630 5th Ave., N.Y., N.Y. (How to
book on fire building and other camping skills.)
VanDer Smissen, Betty. A Leader's Guide To Nature
Oriented Activities. Iowa State University Press.
Ames, Iowa. (Nature games and hikes.)
Berger, Jean. Program Activities For Camps. Burgess
Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn. (Program
ideas for all areas of the camp program.)
Thurston, LaRue. Good Times Around The Campfire.
Association Press, N.Y., N.Y. (Campfire games and
stunts.)
Kjellstrom, Bjorn. Be Expert With Map & Compass.
Charles Scribner's Sons, N.Y., N.Y. (Compass
skills.)
Mackay, Joy. Rain Drops Keep Falling On My Tent.
Vicor Books, Available from American Camping
Association, Martinsville, Ind. (Rainy day ideas.)
Rathmel, R. C. Back Packing. Burgess Publishing,
Minneapolis, Minn. (Camping and back packing
skills.)
Thomas, Dian. Roughing It Easy. Warner Books, Inc.,
75 Rockefeller Plaza, N.Y., N.Y.
Pease, Jim. Birds, Beasts, Bugs & Us. 4H-808b

4-H OWNED CAMPING LOCATIONS
Langwood 4-H Reserve, South of Muscatine
Reservations: Louisa Co. Extension Office
324 Van Buren
Wapello, Iowa 52625

Pine Bluffs 4-H Camp, Decorah
Reservations: Winneskiek Co. Extension Office
Box 67
Decorah, Iowa 52101

Iowa 4-H Camping Center, Madrid
Reservations: State 4-H Office
33 Curtiss Hall, ISU
Ames, Iowa 50011

For other places to go camping see the list of
state parks and recreation areas available
from the Iowa Conservation Commission.
SAMPLE PERMISSION SLIP

____________________________________ has his/her parents'/guardians' permission to attend the Jolly Rogers 4-H Club campout, ______________________ at ______________________. In the event of serious injury, our son/daughter may receive emergency medical treatment.

signed ________________________________________________

______________________________

Father/Mother

______________________________

Address

______________________________

Phone

SAMPLE

CLUB CAMPOUT CHECKLIST

The following is a quick summary of items to discuss with the entire group prior to a camp outing.

☐ Campout purpose __________________________________________

☐ Where and when to go ______________________ (time) __________ (place)

☐ Chaperones

☐ Idea suggestions for activities ____________________________________

☐ Kaper chart (Assignments of who is to do what prior to and during campout)

☐ List of equipment needed (individual & group) ______________________

☐ Campout expenses and how to meet them ______________________

☐ Camp rules (what are they going to be?) ______________________

☐ Skills needed and practice sessions

☐ Transportation

☐ Health, safety & sanitation (Permission slips, insurance, first aid kit, phone committee, etc.) ______________________

☐ Bad weather alternatives

☐ Food (menus, food purchases)

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