

FAMILY CAMP!
from home!

Here are some ideas you can use with your family that will provide you with the opportunity to experience an evening or afternoon at camp together right where you are. We've included five ideas that you can use over five weeks of the summer or spend a week doing all five camp events.

from: **CAN  BDA**
YOUTH



1
CAMP-OUT
NIGHT

FAMILY CAMP

from home!

Activity

This evening spend time building an epic blanket fort in your living room or family room. Gather as many blankets, cushions, pillows, clothes pegs or chip bag clips as you can. Work together to see how big you can make your tent using the supplies you have gathered. Make sure each person has an opportunity to place a blanket on the structure or help cover the floor with pillows.

(If you own a tent, work together to set up the tent – be sure each person has an opportunity to help set up the tent or to place pillows and sleeping bags inside.)

Devotions

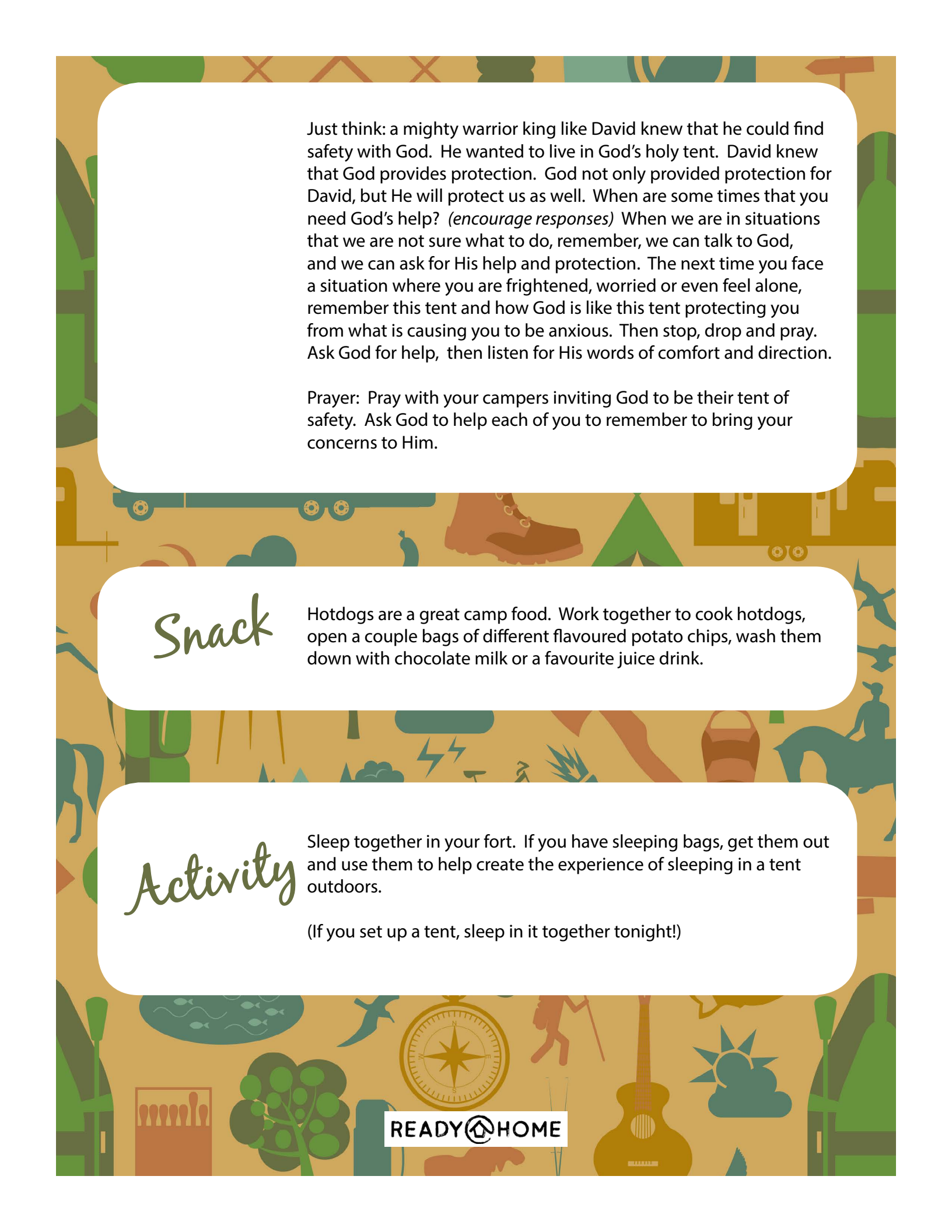
(Gather everyone inside your fort.) Wow! We did such a great job working together to build what I think is the best fort ever. I love how we all worked together. What made building this fort exciting for you? *(encourage responses)* What were some of the challenges/difficulties we had building our fort? *(encourage responses)*

What does being inside a fort make you think of? I feel like I'm in a tent. I wonder: do you think you'd enjoy sleeping outside with no shelter – no tent over you? It might be exciting, but I think I'd rather be in a tent especially if it started to rain or if I heard any sounds I couldn't identify. This tent, our fort, provides us with protection!

I wonder if you remember King David from the Bible. He faced Goliath, was hated by King Saul whom he loved, and fought and won many battles against Israel's enemies. Despite being a great king and warrior he still faced troubles and was frightened. Who do you think he turned to when he was in trouble? Who did he turn to when he was frightened or worried? He turned to God! Listen to what he says to God.

Psalm 27:5 - *When I'm in trouble, He [God] will keep me safe in his house. He will hide me in the safety of His holy tent. He will put me on a rock that is very high.*

Psalm 61:4 - *I long to live in Your holy tent forever. There I find safety in the shadow of Your wings.*



Just think: a mighty warrior king like David knew that he could find safety with God. He wanted to live in God's holy tent. David knew that God provides protection. God not only provided protection for David, but He will protect us as well. When are some times that you need God's help? (*encourage responses*) When we are in situations that we are not sure what to do, remember, we can talk to God, and we can ask for His help and protection. The next time you face a situation where you are frightened, worried or even feel alone, remember this tent and how God is like this tent protecting you from what is causing you to be anxious. Then stop, drop and pray. Ask God for help, then listen for His words of comfort and direction.

Prayer: Pray with your campers inviting God to be their tent of safety. Ask God to help each of you to remember to bring your concerns to Him.

Snack

Hotdogs are a great camp food. Work together to cook hotdogs, open a couple bags of different flavoured potato chips, wash them down with chocolate milk or a favourite juice drink.

Activity

Sleep together in your fort. If you have sleeping bags, get them out and use them to help create the experience of sleeping in a tent outdoors.

(If you set up a tent, sleep in it together tonight!)

CAMPFIRE
NIGHT
2

FAMILY CAMP

from home!

Activity

Work together to build a campfire. You can build an indoor campfire by using a small table lamp without the shade; gather paper towel or gift wrap rolls to form logs around the lamp (let your campers draw wood grain lines on them to make them look more authentic), and scrunch up red, yellow and orange tissue paper to tuck in between the logs. Be careful that you do not put the paper directly on the bulb. When ready simply plug in your campfire.

(If you can have a real campfire, encourage your kids to help set up the logs inside the pit, and then to sit back and watch the flames once you've lit the fire. Be sure to have a bucket of water nearby.)

Encourage your campers to share some of their favourite campfire songs. Be sure to sing a couple of your favourites too. If you need help, simply do an online search for campfire songs before you begin your time together. Remember "Repeat-After-Me" songs are always a hit at camp. Campfire skits and sharing of some jokes can add to the campfire experience.

Devotions

What a great fire we have built together. There's something captivating about fires. I feel like I could sit and watch it burn for hours. What do you like about a campfire? *(encourage responses)* I love to watch the flames dance, the burning wood glow, the warmth it spreads to those sitting around it, the smell of wood burning, and the way it melts marshmallows. Even with an indoor campfire I can imagine the sights and smells. But as beautiful as fire is to watch, we always must be careful. What could happen with a fire if we are not careful? *(encourage kids to share ideas: it can get out of control quickly, it could burn things we don't mean to burn, a spark can fly and cause the fire to spread, homes and forests have been destroyed by simple careless sparks)* Fires can quickly spread if not controlled. What are some other things that can spread if we are not careful? *(encourage ideas such as: rumors, spreading of secrets, hurt feelings, misunderstandings)*

In James 3:5 (NIV), we read that the tongue is like a spark. In the same way, the tongue is a small part of a person's body. But it talks big. Think about how a small spark can set a big forest on fire. A careless word can cause a great fire of destruction. Careless words can hurt feelings and damage relationships we have with each other. In Proverbs 18:21 we read that *"The tongue has the power of life and death."* Perhaps you have been hurt by words someone else has said to you or about you. How did that make you feel?
(encourages responses)

God doesn't want us to hurt each other with our words. He wants us to control our words. He wants to use our tongues to bring life, to sing praise to Him and to tell others about his great love for us. There's an old song that was sometimes sung at campfires that says:

*It only takes a spark
To get a fire going
And soon all those around
Can warm up in its glowing
That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
You spread His love to ev'ryone
You want to pass it on!
(Pass It On by Kurt Kaiser)*

In 1 Thessalonians 5:11 we are reminded to *"encourage one another and build each other up."* Let's try to remember to use kind words, encouraging words and to use our tongues to spread God's Good News.

Prayer: Pray with your campers asking God to help each of you to stop and think before you speak. Ask for God to show you ways to use your words to build each other up and to encourage others. Pray for opportunities to share God's Good News.

Snack

No campfire is complete without smores. Buy/make snacks with marshmallows: s'more flavoured cookies, s'more flavoured Pop Tarts, brownies with marshmallows melted on top, s'more flavoured ice cream, etc. (If you are having a real backyard campfire be sure to have marshmallows, graham wafer cookies and chocolate bars to make homemade s'mores.)

3
WIDE GAME
NIGHT

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Activity

Choose a wide game that your family might enjoy such as a Scavenger Hunt, Sponge Wars, Capture the Flag or Sardines or Keep Up using a balloon. Check out <https://youthgroupgames.com.au/category/wide/> or <https://www.ultimatecampresource.com/camp-games/large-group-games/> for additional ideas. Adapt the rules on how to play based on being indoors or outdoors. Gather the supplies you might need and encourage everyone to dress appropriately. Divide your family into two teams or feel free to invite another family to join you and compete on two mixed teams or family against family.

(Adapt the games for indoors if necessary or go to a nearby park and enjoy the open space)

(If it's not possible to do a wide game, feel free to pull out a favourite (or a new) board game to play with your family.)

Bring out the acrylic paint and give each team a separate colour to use to paint their team's colour on their faces and arms. (If you don't have paint for team colours, perhaps team members could wear the same colour t-shirts or make matching armbands for family members to wear.)

Devotions

I'm beat! But I had so much fun running, hiding and being with each of you. Thank you for playing our game(s) and trying your best to play along. What did you enjoy about our game(s)? (*encourage responses*) Were there times tonight that you didn't enjoy yourself? What happened? (*encourage responses*) How did you handle your disappointment if your team didn't do as well as you hoped they would? (*encourage responses*)

When we play games together or are just living life together it's important that we do our best to accept each other. That means we need to consider each other's different opinions or ways of doing things. When playing our game tonight was it easy or difficult to agree on how you were going to work together with your team

members? Playing games together is a great way to be reminded that we are different from each other and have different ways of handling situations even when we are from the same family. Sometimes we disagree and we get upset when someone doesn't want to do things our way.

Did you know that God calls us to be peacemakers? A peacemaker is someone who listens to what is being shared, tries to understand and help others live according to how God wants us to live. God wants us to live in peace and unity. In Psalm 133:1 we read *"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!"* and in Colossians 3:15 we also read *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body [one team or one family] you were called to peace. And be thankful."* God has called us to be a part of this family, this team and to work together to be united in how we handle different situations that we may face. We need to spend time listening to each other, trying to understand each other's way of looking at things and then thinking about how God would want us to handle a situation.

The best way for us to be united is to spend time with God as a family. What are some ways we can spend time together with God? Tell me your ideas. (*encourage responses*) You've got some great ideas – we can go to church together; we could read the Bible or Bible stories together; and we can pray for and with each other.

Prayer: Let's start with prayer. Does anyone have something that they would like us to pray about tonight? Spend time in prayer for your family asking God to help you to live united in peace with each other. Be sure to spend a few minutes thanking God for your family and for each member of your family.

Snack

Refreshments after running and chasing each other in a wide game are a must. We suggest gathering around a picnic table or your kitchen table for ice cream sandwiches, ice cream cones or build your own sundaes with a chilled bottle of water.

TALENT
NIGHT

FAMILY CAMP

from home!

Activity

Encourage each member of your family to think of something they do well and something they would like to do better. Encourage them to practice their skill or talent ahead of the "Family Camp Talent Night". You may also want to encourage your family members to think of a skill or talent that interests them but that they haven't put to use before. Encourage them to research, learn, and practice something new that they can share with the rest of the family.

When you gather together, practice a couple of "camp cheers" that you will use after each family member shares their talent. You can find great cheers at <https://www.ultimatecampresource.com/camp-songs/chants-cheers/>.

Devotions

Who knew we had such talent in our family? I'm so glad that each of you was willing to not only entertain us but to share your talent with us. How much time did you spend getting ready for tonight's talent show? (*encourage responses*) Why was it hard or easy to get up in front of us and share your talent? (*encourage responses*) Would it have been possible to get up and entertain us as well as you did if you didn't practice at least once before tonight? (*encourage responses*)

Tonight, we had a talent show where we were able to show off our abilities. Another word for talents is gifts. Our gifts or talents are given to us by God. In James 1:17a we read that "every good and perfect gift is from God. This kind of gift comes down from the Father who created the heavenly lights." God gave them to us with a special purpose in mind. What do you think that purpose might be? (*encourage responses*) Do you think it is so that other people will see us and think about how special we are? Our gifts or talents are not given to us so we can make ourselves the centre of attention. They

are given to us so we could point people to God. Listen to what 1 Peter 4:10 says: *"God's gifts of grace come in many forms. Each of you have received a gift in order to serve others. You should use it faithfully."*

We've each been given a gift from God, and we are to use it to serve others. What do you think happens when we use the gifts God has given us to serve others? It helps people to know God and that He cares for them, just as He cares for each of us. Think about your talent and gifts; how do you think you can use them to serve others? *(encourage responses)*

Prayer: Give thanks to God for the talents and gifts He has given to each member of your family. Ask God to provide you with opportunities to share your talent in a way that will help lead others to Him.

Snack

Refreshments for a Talent Night could include sweet things such as cake and ice cream, homemade chocolate-chip cookie ice cream sandwiches, caramel popcorn with lemonade or ice-tea.

FAMILY CAMP

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Activity

Choose a camp type craft to do with your family. Keep the craft simple so that any age of your family could do it. Some ideas are painting rocks (with faces, words or to make tic-tac-toe game pieces), friendship bracelets, pony bead creatures or paracord key chains or bracelets. For ideas and instructions go online and search for “camp crafts for kids”.

Gather the supplies you’ll need for your crafts ahead of time.

Sitting together around a table or in a circle on the floor, work on your craft items together. Be sure to spend time talking about your craft, your day and what you love about going to camp or on family vacations.

Devotions

Great job everyone on your creations! I’m excited that not only did we get to make something, but we got to work on it while spending time together. I love having the chance to chat and hear about your day, your memories and your opinions. Now, let’s take a moment and show each other what we’ve made. *(Give each of your campers a moment to share what they made.)* How does it feel to create something with your own two hands? *(encourage responses)*

If you’re excited about what you’ve created, just think how excited God is over His creation. God created the whole world and everything in it. And at the end of each day He looked at His creation and declared “*It is good*” (Genesis 1:9). On the sixth day of creation, God created His best work. Do you know what He created on that day? Listen to Genesis 1:27: “*So God created human beings in his own likeness. He created them to be like himself. He created them as male and female.*” How do we know that we are His special creation? Because in verse 31 at the end of day six God says, “*It is very good.*”

Take a moment and look at each other. We are all members of the same family, but do we all look the same or do we look different from each other? *(Have your camper share ways that you are all the same and different from one another.)* Are we able to do the

same things or do we have different skills and talents? *(Have your campers share what their individual talents and skills are.)* There is one thing that is similar about how each of us were created. When God created us in His image, He created us with the desire to love, worship and serve Him.

In Ephesians 2:10 we read, *"We are God's creation. He created us to belong to Christ Jesus. Now we can do good works. Long ago God prepared these works for us to do."* God didn't create us just to sit around and look sweet (and you do look sweet!). He created mankind to belong to Him – to have a relationship with Him. He also created mankind to do good works that He planned for each to do. God calls each one in our family to have a special relationship with Him. God loves each of us just the way we are. And God equipped us with the talents or gifts we need to do the work He calls each of us to do.

Prayer: *(If your child has not yet invited Jesus to have a special relationship with them be sure to provide them with that opportunity tonight.)* Let's thank God for our favourite creations. What are some things you'd like to thank God for? *(Give each child an opportunity to thank God for His creation)* Ask God to help each of you to be aware of tasks He calls you to do and that you will trust Him to help you complete that task.

Snack

Finish up your Craft Night with a favourite camp snack: Rice Crispy squares (homemade or store bought) and chocolate milk.