



Chots' Shot

Summer camp has always been a big part of my life. I have learned so much about both myself and how the world works from my many summers. For decades, camp directors have praised the virtues of camp to everyone. We talk about how camp builds self-esteem, how camp teaches new skills, how camps inspire physical, emotional and spiritual growth, and how camp helps children make and maintain friendships. Over the last decade, the American Camp Association has done intensive research on all aspects of camp and the research has proven what camp directors have said all along: "camp gives kids a world of good."

ACA researchers recently finished a five-year impact study focusing on the lasting impacts of camp on both campers and staff. One of the areas of focus was on "relationship skills." According to the study, relationship skills is an umbrella term used to define the methods we use to seek, form and maintain healthy and supportive connections to other people. ACA's study found that camps are a great place to learn and develop relationship skills. It turns out that relationship skills are the most in-depth and frequent outcome study participants shared they learned at camp. This study also found that relationship skills is one of the most "transferable" outcomes from camp to the rest of the world. Participants also shared that relationship skills as a "camp critical skill," meaning that a camp experience was critical to developing this skill. The research states "camp experiences are rich in opportunities to interact with others, peers and adults, in ways that are different from school and home. And while it is clear that youth learn across a vast learning landscape, we know that relationship skills are one way that camp experiences make a unique and valuable contribution to that land scape."

This research backs up my own story. My camp friends have always been my best friends, and still are today. I know that I learned how to make and keep friends from spending many summers at camp. I truly hope your campers are having the similar experiences every day at the J Day Camps.

I hope that everyone has restful Shabbat and an enjoyable weekend. Please check out the photo gallery at facebook.com/groups/jdaycamps2019

Happy Camping.
Chots

Quick Hits from around **Camp!**



Camp Essman Katan

"The Trash truck is here! The Trash truck is here!" Mr. Greg came out with his trash truck from Waste Connections to show the campers how the truck worked and talk to them about trash and recycling! The best part of this awesome experience was everyone took turns in the driver's seat! "Watch out for us on the road!" Listening to the horn honking brought smiles and giggles to everyone! The campers wore their tie-dye shirts for Wacky Wednesday and sprayed with paint outside on big sheets. In the classrooms, everyone used dot art, eye droppers, and paint to decorate handkerchiefs. When they are dry, we will make flowers using pipe cleaners to beautify our camp! This was a great collaborative experience for your campers. Exposure to process art is so wonderful for all the campers! Have a happy and safe weekend.



Gymnastics Camp

The counselors worked with the campers on back handsprings, handstands, leaps on the beams, cartwheels on the floor mats and casting on the bars. They had a blast doing obstacle courses with their groups and making new friends along the way. The campers are progressing in skill level and learning new skills throughout these fun weeks.



Camp of the Arts

The kids embarked through the wild nature habitat that is the J campus. Whilst exploring the grounds with our counselors, the campers collected objects from nature and used them to create spectacular color pieces of artworks. Puppets were made displaying the true creativity of Arts Camp with the creation of unicorn kittens, Captain CJ, block man, and many others awesome characters. The kids also had a blast experiencing the Uni-Sphere on Thursday, an experience that was an absolute pleasure! Also, right before the camp-wide Maccabi Color Games – which illustrated the awesome spirit, or as we say it, RUACH – our creative art campers made dazzling galaxy bottles!



Sports Camp & Girls Got Game

This week, sports camp participated in Olympic events which tested their overall athleticism. Events included 25m and 50m dashes, long jump, football distance throws and a round-robin soccer tournament. Campers were divided into different teams and represented a country for the week. Each event gave them the opportunity to earn points for their team to take home the overall gold!

This week's new game was ringette, which puts a fun twist on traditional floor hockey. The puck is replaced by a foam ring and the stick blades are replaced with a rubber tip. The game promotes strong teamwork as passing the ring is written into the rules as a must before a team can score. This new game was such a hit that campers may see it as a tournament of the week later on in the summer!



Teen Camp

This week at Teen Camp was sunny skies and lots of activities for the campers! We ventured out to Great American Human Foosball where teams competed in foosball as well as other human-sized games! The next day was a beautiful day at Aquaport where the kids had a refreshing dip in the pool! Lastly, topped the week off with a trip to Fitz's prior to our Lock-In! The lock-in was a smash and the kids didn't stay up too late! See ya next week!

Camp Nat Koplar

We had a hot and steamy week at Camp Koplar! The children have enjoyed the pool and I am seeing a lot of improvement with our little guys! They are floating, using their "ice cream scoops" and "pizza arms." In nature, the children studied bees and their body parts. They drank like bees would with their "proboscis" straws too! Check out our pictures of camp on our "Camp Koplar 2019" Facebook page. All you need to do is ask to join!





Camp Baer

Wow, what a week! Warm weather this week broke our streak of overcast skies and cool temperatures. The pool quickly became a camp favorite to cool off and enjoy the baking sun! Our campers are moving right along during swim lessons. Our Monday re-test led to multiple campers progressing into the next swim level. Camp was overtaken by peace, love and flower power due to the groovy Tie-Dye theme on Wacky Wednesday. The Gardening focus was introduced this week. Organized by a graduate student from Webster University, campers were tasked with collecting bees. The study on bees created the opportunity for the campers to learn more about the natural world as well as enjoy the beauty that is The Garden of Eden at the J.

This week also had some fun events. The Saint Louis Science Center brought what is called the Uni-Sphere to campus. The Uni-Sphere is an interactive experience for the campers to explore the night sky during the day! This week also brought us the famous Maccabi Color Games. All the camps were split into color groups and participated in various activities in order to propel their team and become champions of the Color Games. Points were based on task completion, team spirit and team work. While there is only one color that can claim the title, everyone was a winner during these Color Games. In all, it was a busy and spirited week of camp!



Camp Essman Gadol

Camp this week was filled with new exciting activities and lots of new friends. In art, the campers made wonderful nature paintings. The campers truly enjoyed the competition and comradery of our Maccabi Color Games; the day was filled with energy, excitement and laughter. The performance of each groups' dance routine impressed our judges. It was a busy week at Camp Essman Gadol as we had the Saint Louis Science Center bring an inflatable planetarium where the kids virtually explored the moon. The change in weather made it a perfect week for our Sun Art activity where they got to mix science with art. Our Tuesday all camp activity this week was Minute to Win it Games where the campers competed head to head to see which team could complete each task the fastest.



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