



Vacation activities for school children

School will soon be out. The children will be on the loose and parents might be experiencing mixed feelings. For some, this means a break from the morning routine and all the stresses that accompany it. However, that stress may now be stretched throughout the day if the children are going to be at home. Are you one of the parents wondering what to do with the children for the long vacation?

The number of vacation camps has exploded over the last decade with a number of organizations providing good quality entertainment, education and experiential learning opportunities for children of all ages. But many are expensive and out of the question if you have more than one child. Fortunately, the Ministry of Youth and Sport Affairs hosts free camps in a number of communities nationwide, churches have vacation Bible School and community organizations offer small scale activities for children.

Camps can be an excellent way to entertain and keep children constructively engaged while you are at work, but there are a few things wise parents consider when selecting a camp:

1. Is the venue appropriate and safe for the kind of activities offered and the number of children?

2. Are the camp staff properly qualified or trained to work with children?

Particularly when it comes to things like swimming, kayaking or similar, make sure the instructors are qualified, that safety precautions are observed and there are sufficient supervisors to ensure your child is properly taken care of.

3. **Supervision:** What is the adult to child ratio like? One adult to ten children is fairly acceptable for regular sit down or low-level activities. There should always be adequate staff to supervise and care for the children.
4. **Ask questions:** Visit the site before you register and ask the important questions like: how the camp will be managed, if there are policies for staff-child interaction, discipline, safety, particularly if there are field trips involved.
5. **Allow children to have some say.** Give them a chance to do things they don't get to do at school - explore art, music or outdoor activities. Let them have an opportunity to be a child and to create great memories.
6. Once your child is taking part in the camp, **check in to observe for yourself how the children are treated** and how well organized the activities are and perhaps join them for a field trip.

Many of us need to find reliable supervision and care for their children at this time and quality care can be expensive. Let us make sure that our children are in places that are safe, nurturing and caring and that we get value for money.

Some upcoming camps

NIHERST's 2019 August POP-UP Fun Weeks (STEM Camps)

NIHERST & Chuck.E.Cheese's 2019 STEM Vacation Camps

<http://www.niherst.gov.tt/scipop/scipop-camps.html>

Alliance Française

From July 9th to August 2nd, the Alliance Française will be conducting French Summer Camp for students between the ages of 6-14 years old.

The 2019 summer camp is a blend of educational, physical, artistic, musical and entertainment activities designed to introduce students to French language and French-speaking culture.

<https://alliancetnt.org/summer-camp/>

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs

<https://www.msya.gov.tt/divisions/youth/programmes/camp-vybe>

YMCA

<https://www.facebook.com/YMCAofTrinidadandTobago/photos/gm.336339900319636/10157314784929850/?type=3&theater>