



NO BATHS AT CAMP

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American Jewish camping began as a way to distance children from crowded urban neighborhoods in the early 1900s and later to protect them from polio epidemics in the 1930s and 40s. Today, Jewish camps allow children to explore their Jewish identity with peers in a joyful, nurturing environment with a wide range of cultural, artistic, and athletic experiences.

Many families look forward to celebrating Shabbat at the end of a busy week as they shop, clean, invite guests, and prepare for the holiday. The festive Friday evening meal welcomes the Sabbath. Saturdays offer family time -- with the luxury of sleeping late, attending synagogue services, and enjoying favorite activities! Shabbat ends with a short, beautiful ceremony called *havdallah*, meaning separation. Havdallah gives us a way to savor the last sweet moments of a day of rest before wishing all *Shavuah Tov*, a good week.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN READING:

- Which activities in this book have you participated in at camp or school? Which activities can be done only at camp?
- How does your family make Shabbat different from other days? If Shabbat celebration hasn't been part of your family's tradition, what might you do to recognize its specialness?

Jewish camps focus on a variety of specialties and represent all levels of Jewish observance. You can find a camp that reflects your family's culture, interests, and values as well as your commitment to charitable causes, Israel, sports, or special needs. The Foundation for Jewish Camp at www.JewishCamp.org is a great resource for finding the right camp. Many camps have tours and family experiences to enjoy together.

If your family isn't ready for overnight camping yet, bring some camping fun home. What camp activity could you recreate in your back yard or living room? Your family might host a Shabbat dinner and sing-along or a mid-week sleepover and marshmallow roast. What silly camp songs and stories do you remember that you might share with your children?

