



Grandma Camp Resource Guide

The Ultimate Resource to
Plan and Host Your Own
Grandma Camp

Copyright & Affiliate Disclosure



Copyright © 2023 by NanaJill Media. All rights reserved.

This eBook, or any portion thereof, may not be reproduced except for personal, non-commercial use. This eBook may not be used in any other manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher.

You can contact us at:

www.GrandmaCamps.com | grandkidconnection@gmail.com

Affiliate Disclosure:

This eBook may contain affiliate links. If you decide to click on something I recommend and buy it, I may get a small commission. But . . . here's the best part . . . you get something you want but won't pay anything extra!! Win-win for both of us!

And, just for the record . . . I only recommend stuff I really love and would tell my own family about.

Get the seasonal
**Spring,
Summer,
Fall, &
Winter**

Theme Packets to
Host Awesome
Grandma Camps!



Get Yours Today!

Reviews



What Have Other Grandparents Said About This Resource Guide?

Kris B said:

"This book introduced a fun concept for strengthening relationships with my grandchildren. The ideas started churning in my head and I found myself getting excited to try and organize my first-ever grandma camp.

When it comes to grandparenting, no "one size fits all", but the information in this book gives me some direction and ideas to get started. Our efforts don't need to be perfect to still be valuable and to still create beautiful memories. These connections we make are what's important (for both generations)."

Laurie D said:

"Jill, I'm so thankful for the time and energy you have put into helping grandparents create lasting memories with their grandchildren. The world is so full of negativity, but when grandparents can invest in the lives of their grandchildren in a fun way like this, grandparents can truly change the world for good.

Grandma camp is a great opportunity to invest in character, instill values and build up and encourage grandkids."

Karen said:

"There are lots of ideas out there, but I found yours the BEST! Your tips and fun ideas were so helpful!"

Mimi said:

"Thank you, thank you, thank you! Our camp is next month and you have really helped my planning efforts."

About Me



How Did I Get Here?

I love being a Mom. . .but I never dreamed of this! Pretty unintentionally, my hubby and I seemed to outsmart birth control and ended up having 6 kids in 8 years! Nope. . .no multiples either. Talk about an adventure! Now, before you think I'm crazy and out of my mind, let me tell you that I would have *never* planned it that way, but now. . .I wouldn't go back and change it for anything!

We had 5 sons and a daughter. We now have 11 grandsons and 5 granddaughters. (Yes, we do have a lot of boys around here!) The moral of the story to all of this: Don't kill your teenagers, they may give you grandchildren someday. 😊 Trust me! I know how much restraint that takes!!



Nana & Papa and the Littles

My given name is Jill, but like most of you, when my first grandchild was born, I needed a "grandparent" name. My kids asked us what we wanted the grandchildren to call us. Oh my! That set off a decision-making process that was more involved than building a 7,500-piece Lego set (the newest Millennium Falcon Collector set – the Littles love Lego)!

Since my hubby and I still had both sets of parents living, they were already "grandma and grandpa" on both sides! We needed something to set us apart to avoid confusion. Wow! Getting to choose my own name! I figured it had better be good since I was going to hear it for the rest of my life.

It didn't take long for me to fall in love with being called Nana. My hubby became Papa, and now even our own children call us by those names most of the time. Because my grandkids were going to have a special name for me and my hubby, we created a special name for them. They have become our Littles.

There are 15 of those Littles now, and soon they will be bigger than me (which won't be too hard since I'm only about 5'2" on a "tall" day anyway). Can I still call them my Littles then? Hmm. . .I think they will always and forever be my Littles no matter how big they get to be.

Dedication



This book is dedicated to my family who made me Nana and helped create Camp NanaPapa. . .and all the wonderful memories that go with it!

Love to you all!



My Bo

My Children

And. . .All My Littles

Table of Contents



Front Stuff

Copyright & Affiliate Disclosure.....	i
Reviews.....	ii
About Me.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Who Is This Book For?.....	vi
Welcome!.....	vii

The Important Stuff

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 – Getting Started.....	5
Chapter 2 – Budgeting for Camp.....	9
Chapter 3 – Set Up Your Schedule.....	12
Chapter 4 – Plan Your Meals.....	16
Chapter 5 – Activities, Games and Fun!.....	20
Chapter 6 – Preparing for Camp.....	23
Chapter 7 – Last Minute Prep.....	26
Chapter 8 – Camp Days.....	29
Chapter 9 – After Camp.....	31

End Stuff

Thank You!.....	34
-----------------	----

Who is This Book For?



This book is for you if you want to spend more quality time with your grandchildren and have more fun than you've ever had in your life!

This book is for you if you are a busy grandparent who would like to figure out a way to get the grandchildren together with you and create memories to last a lifetime!

This book is for you if you need to wrap your mind around trying to organize and pull off a grandma camp but just don't know where to start!

This book is for YOU!

Inside, you will find help to organize and plan a Grandma Camp. We cover everything from the planning stages and preparation to the fun and aftermath of the perfect camp with your grandkids. You will find checklists, explanations, and a printable planner to help you every step of the way.

Bringing those little cousins together is so much fun for them and you. The time you spend together will never be forgotten.

NOTE:

The ideas in this book are purposely generic to help you plan your camp to fit your individual needs and circumstances. Since everyone's situation is different, no one size will fit all. This book is just a primer to help you with organizing the structure of your camp.

So . . . Get Your Creative On!

If you need more specific ideas, we have [seasonal theme packets](#) that have ideas for actual activities, crafts, games, outings, meal plans, bedtime devotionals, etc. for each season of the year.

Get the seasonal
**Spring,
Summer, Fall,
& Winter** Theme
Packets to Host
Awesome Grandma
Camps!



Get Yours Today!



Welcome!

Welcome to the fabulous world of Grandma Camps. . . or Cousin Camps. . . or whatever you want to call it! For the sake of making things easy, we call it Grandma Camp. (But, feel free to cross out the name and put in your own! 😊)

This book is a resource guide to help you plan and organize the perfect Grandma Camp. You can literally pull this off in a couple of weeks or even a few days if you have to. This is a great place to start especially if you are holding your *first* grandma camp.

- *Are you going to host a week-long summer camp?*
- *Maybe you want to get your feet wet and just try a weekend camp?*
- *Or perhaps you need to fit day camps into a busy summer schedule?*
- *Or you just want to spend some time with the grandkids during one of their school holiday breaks?*

We will take you step-by-step and walk you through holding your camp. But first, we have some advice for you. . .

The main thing is to K.I.S.S it! (Keep it Simple, Sister!)

So, in the interest of keeping things simple, we've created little sections with each step for you:

- Pre-planning
- Setting up a Schedule
- Meal Planning
- Preparing for Camp
- Last Minute Prep
- During Camp Days
- After Camp



Spending quality time with your grandkids doesn't have to be a hassle or take a lot of time to plan. And hosting a Grandma Camp (or cousin camp) is a great way to build relationships, memories, and friendships that last.

Are you ready? Let's go. . .



Grandma Camp

This section will introduce you to the wonderful world of Grandma Camp and answer some of our most frequently asked questions.



Introduction

So, are you ready for this?? If you're reading this little guide, then you must be serious about holding a Grandma Camp.

Let's begin with the end in mind.

In order to end up hosting the perfect Grandma Camp, you need to know where you're headed. Decide on what you want your camp to look like. Then, as you go through this book, you can choose which things will best fit your circumstance and your end goal.

First things first, Deciding to hold a Grandma Camp is a big deal. However, don't stress! ***The first rule is: Know your limits!*** Don't take on more than you can handle. Judge how much you can and can't take on. If you do this, you'll find it's a great experience that you'll want to make a yearly tradition. If you go overboard, you may never do it twice. Make it simple or go all out, but just find your sweet spot!

Start by asking yourself some questions. . .

What Should I Call My Grandma Camp?

While there are no specifics on how to come up with a name for your camp, most grandparents will choose to either use a generic name like Grandma Camp or personalize it a bit more like our camp – Camp NanaPapa.

A fun generic name is *Cousins Camp*. After all, this is where the cousins gather together as friends. Of course, simply calling it *Grandma Camp*, *Grandpa Camp* or *Grandparent Camp* are all acceptable.

If you choose to personalize it, it may be more memorable and fun for your grandchildren. Camp (grandma or grandpa name) is easy. You can combine the names as my hubby and I have done with Camp NanaPapa. You could put your grandparent name first and then "camp" at the end.

Or, if you wanted, you could dump the grandparent names all together and use a last name, a fun word or phrase, or something that describes your family. Here are some examples:

- The Bowler Bunch Camp (since Bowler is our last name)
- Summer Fun Camp
- Crusin' Crawford Family Camp (if you like bike riding)

There is definitely no right or wrong answer here. However, you may want to find something that you will stick with. My grandkids constantly talk about Camp NanaPapa, and it will be part of their memories forever. ❤️



Introduction (cont.)

How Should I Organize My Camp?

The ways to organize your camp are as varied as you are individual. You may want to give some thought to your energy levels, tolerance, and availability. Here are a few suggestions to structure your camp:

- **Day camp(s)** – These do not include any overnights. This could be structured as just one single day camp or several days of camp spread over a week, a month or even the whole summer. They could be all day or just half days. If you choose this format, try to make these days feel different than other days or times spent with you.
- **Multi-day or Week-long camp** – This type of camp is most common for grandparents wishing to have their grandchildren for a concentrated bit of time without parents around. It can also be the most exhausting. However, if you're up to it, it's extremely rewarding! These camps may or may not include overnights. So, plan a 3-day camp, 4-day camp, or a whole week to be with those grandchildren.
- **Long-distance camp** – This type of camp is conducted over video chat with the aid of email and snail mail. It's best to spread out the days and limit the time to just an hour or so each session. Children's attention span is short and can be even shorter over video chat.
- **Older and Younger camps** – This approach is geared to either age or ability of your grandchildren. As the children get older, it gets to be more challenging to have younger and older grandchildren together and fill the interest of both groups. (See more info on multi-age groups on pg. 22.) Having said that, it's not impossible.

However, splitting your group can have some definite advantages – having a smaller group, and be able to gear activities more toward those specific age groups. The other idea here is that you can use those older children to mentor and help little ones or be an assistant for you!

Which Grandchildren Should Attend Grandma Camp?

Let's chat about who should come to your camp. The door is wide open on this subject. Honestly, there are no rules here, only your preference.

Here are a few things to think about when deciding:

- **Little people in diapers** - Little grandkids in diapers can be a challenge for many reasons. First, it's inconvenient. Second, having to change a diaper can cause a disruption in an activity or outing, plus you have to carry the diapers with you if you're going out. Third, if little ones are not old enough to be potty trained, they may not be old enough to participate in activities created for older children. So, you may want to include those little ones with parental supervision or exclude them until they get older. Sometimes, excluding them when they are younger, gives them something fun to look forward to in the future.
- **Long-distance grandchildren** – Obviously, if they can travel and attend camp in person, that is the best scenario. However, if they can't, then you need to decide if you could do some of the games, activities, or crafts via video chat so they can be included.



Introduction (cont.)

When Should I Hold Grandma Camp?

This is the most fun question I get, because my answer is. . .ANYTIME!

Any chance that you can get when the kids are home and out of school, is a great time. You can organize several different types of camp throughout the year. Here are some examples of when and what you could put together:

- **Multiple-day Summer Camp** – You could have the kids spend the entire time with you including overnights. You can do a schedule full of summertime fun, games and outings. You can cook out and roast marshmallows. You can swim, have picnics, and go on field trips. This is generally the easiest time of year to host a Grandma Camp.
- **Holiday Fun Camp** – You could host a weekend night and plan a mini camp around a particular holiday.
- **Long Weekends & School Breaks** – These times usually involve a Friday or Monday off school for the kids. It's a great time to do a weekend camp.
- **Preschool Camp** – If you only have little ones that are not yet in school or if you are splitting your camp, you can host multiple camp days while the others are in school. Overnights would be optional, but use discretion, because this takes a LOT of energy!! (There's a reason we have kids when we're young!)

How Long Should Camp Be for My Grandchildren?

Again, the answer to this question is up to you and the ability or attention span of the grandchildren involved. My advice would be to look at your circumstances. Do you have the energy to host a multi-day camp? Is there room for all the children to sleep at your home if you decide to do a camp with an overnight? What is the attention span of the grandkids that will attend? Will they be bored after just a few hours, or could they handle an entire day?

Ask yourself these questions and make a determination on how best to handle this for both you and your grandchildren. And, remember. . .just because this is the way you will handle it this time or this year, doesn't mean that you can't adjust or change your mind for next time.

Should I Involve the Parents in our Grandma Camp?

If and to what extent you involve parents in your camp will be determined by desire and/or necessity. It's more likely to need the parents' help if the children are younger. Let me give you some examples.

If you decide that your grandchildren will not be comfortable spending so much time away from their parents, you can invite the parents to come at certain times like eating lunch or being involved as an audience for a talent show. You also may need help by having more helpers when doing a craft that involves paint or cooking. If you have a lot of grandkids, you may need help with other things like carpooling for outings.

Chapter 1:



Let's Get
Started

Grandma Camp

*This chapter will help
you get your Grandma
Camp off the ground
with confidence.*

Let's Get Started!

Grandma Camp Planner – I know some of you go-getters printed it out already and have it in your favorite notebook 😊. However, if you haven't already printed off your planner, you should have received it as a BONUS to this book. There you will find over 15 sheets to help you stay organized as you plan for camp. Use them. . .or don't. Use just some. . .or all. Do whatever is most helpful.

One of the most important items from the planner will be *your Grandma Camp Checklist*. This checklist was intended for you to not miss a step as you plan and prepare to host the perfect camp for your grandchildren.

So, let's jump right in and take it one step at a time. . .

Choose Your Dates

Think about some dates for when you want to hold your Grandma Camp. Choose some dates and times when you are going to have the most energy – not the day after you've just had the entire extended family over for a holiday dinner or you just completed a big commitment. Think about a time when you can relax and have fun with the kids.

You may want to be flexible with choosing dates as everyone's schedule might not match up. Talk to your kids and plan out some dates to hold camp and decide on what works for everyone. Tell everyone to put the dates on their calendar, and you will get invitations out with all the details to the grandkids soon.

If you are doing more than one camp in a year, you may want to plan out the whole year so the families can plan around camp times. This helps the parents to plan time for themselves also. It's pretty much free babysitting for them so they should take advantage of it.

Choose Your Venue

Decide where you are going to hold your camp. You may choose to do it at your home or maybe you are one of those lucky grandparents that have a cool cabin you can go to. You may also choose to go actual outdoor camping!

Whatever you decide, just make sure the space will accommodate all your needs for your camp – sleeping spaces, cooking and eating spaces, room for activities, etc.

Also, if your camp involves a venue that needs a reservation, get that ASAP!! Venues for summer and holiday times fill up fast!



Let's Get Started (cont.)

Decide on a Theme (optional)

You don't need to choose a theme for your camp, but you can if you want. Sometimes, it helps to direct which activities you do or can give you ideas for some crafts, service ideas, devotionals, music, and even meals.

When it comes to choosing a theme, here are some tips for choosing one to get your creative juices flowing:

- **Assess what you already have on hand** - If you have things to do a fun camp that relates to one theme idea, then you don't have to search for and purchase so many other things to incorporate your theme.
- **Choose a theme that everyone can enjoy** - This one is a bit tougher if you have a wide range of ages and interests attending your camp. Little girls may LOVE unicorns, but older boys may not find that much fun.
- **Think about the abilities of the children** - You may love science, but if you have a bunch of preschoolers, they may find too many science-related projects difficult to understand.
- **Choose a classification and then narrow down a specific theme** - For instance, if you choose Disney, you can focus on one movie, character, place, or even piece of music. You could choose History and center around pioneer ancestors, important historical events, or even dive into the future with robots or space.
- **Go to a party store or dollar store** - You can gain much inspiration just walking up and down the aisles of these types of stores. A local party store may not only have inspiration but find a whole bunch of matching things all in one location that you will need to incorporate your theme!

If you are going to go with a theme for your camp, now is the time to choose it, because you will want to incorporate your theme into your invitations. . .and those are up next.

Send Invites & Packing Lists

There are two ways of looking at this one. . .

On the one hand, you only really need to send invites so that everyone has the important info. However, this could just be in the form of a text message, email, or simple flyer. However, if you want the kids to feel that this is a special time and not just "another weekend at Nana's", you may want to consider something a bit more exciting to give them. . .starting with an actual invitation!

Whatever you decide to do, you definitely want some way to inform your children (the parents) and your grandchildren of the dates, times, place, and expectations. That way, they can plan around camp.

Personally, I do this in the form of an invitation with a packing list of what the kids need to bring. Since the Littles spend so much time at my home, I want to make sure they know that this is "special" time. A printed invitation accomplishes that.

Let's Get Started (cont.)

Send Invites & Packing Lists (cont.)

I've included samples and blanks of an invitation and packing list in your planner for you. Feel free to use them or create your own! You will also find themed invitations in the seasonal theme packets. ([Seasonal theme packets are sold separately.](#))

**One note: You may also want to include things you DON'T want at camp such as electronics, candy, or other things that may distract or cause contention between the cousins.*

Set Your Budget

You may not think this is necessary but let me tell you just how important this really is!! As grandparents, it is so easy to justify spending more and go waaaaay overboard when it comes to our grandkids. A camp doesn't need to cost you a fortune.

I'll talk more about how to budget and some ideas to keep it in check in the next chapter.

Brainstorming

Take some time to brainstorm some ideas for what activities and other things you want to do at camp. This doesn't have to be organized in any particular way. As a matter of fact, just list out ideas that come to you, and then go back and circle the ideas that stand out. If you would like, you can use our pretty brainstorming sheet in the planner.

Welcome Bags

A fun thing to do is to put together a little welcome bag or goodie bag for the kids. We give the kids a colorful, little cinch sack like the ones on our [Grandma Camp Resource Page](#). Inside the sack, we give them a flashlight and other things that go with the theme of our camp. (See our [resource page](#) for some suggestions of items to put in the sacks.)

Plan out some ideas for the welcome/goodie bag on your Brainstorming Sheet.



Resources in the Planner

- Invitation
- Packing List – partially filled & blank
- Brainstorming Sheet
- Grandma Camp Checklist

Chapter 2:



Budgeting for Camp

Grandma Camp

*In this chapter, we'll
explore ways for you to
host your camp for less
money!*

Budgeting for Camp

When setting or creating a budget for your Grandma Camp, I always suggest that you reconcile what you *want* to do with what you can actually afford to do. You may have the luxury of spending whatever you want but, trust me when I say that it may come with some remorse if you don't keep it reigned in and keep track of what you will spend.

When thinking about what you want to spend, be realistic. For instance, I have 15 grandchildren. There is no way that I'm going to be able to do a week-long camp on a hundred dollars. So, take into consideration the things you will spend money on like crafts, outings, and meals.

In this chapter, I will discuss a few ways for you to save money so that you can host your camp for a reasonable amount. After all, if you spend too much money, you may be discouraged when thinking about doing another camp in the future.

Here are some suggestions for getting the most bang for your buck:

- **Set a Dollar Amount** – Even if the amount you choose seems less than what you can think you realistically need to pull off camp, there are creative ways you can offset some of the costs and therefore, spend less money. So, go ahead and set your amount and then stick to it.
- **Keep it Simple** – The tendency is to go all out. . .and that may be your personality. If so, you have my condolences, because that's how I do things. Ha ha! However, I have found that if things are kept simple but fun, it will help you manage your budget as well as your expectations.
- **Shop Sales** – If you create a plan early enough in the process, it will give you plenty of time to shop any sales on décor, craft supplies, and food. You could also take advantage of any early booking discounts for outings or field trips.
- **Choose Your Theme Wisely** – I mentioned this before, but it bears repeating. Choose a theme that you already have items for or something very familiar so that you know where you need to spend and where you can cut back a bit. If you already have lots of items from a large party or event, re-use those items!
- **Use What You Have on Hand** – This is especially helpful when it comes to planning your food. Go through your pantry or food storage and see what you can use up. You may have bulk food items that you got at one of the big box stores and could use that to feed a large group of kids. You may find that you have things in your freezer that need to be used before they go bad. You may also already have some craft items in your stash that could be used up.
- **Think Needs vs. Wants** – This is self-explanatory. Be ready to make compromises if you want something that is going to bust your budget.
- **Use a Free Venue** – I think it goes without saying that you'll save money by not renting a venue like a campground space or getting an AirBnB rental. Usually, staying at home will give you the best bang for your buck.

Budgeting for Camp (cont.)

- **Use Discount Places to Buy Things** – Using sites like Amazon and Oriental Trading can save you some money if you can wait for shipping. If you are shopping local, you can shop places like your neighborhood dollar store or big box store (if you need to buy in bulk). However, I'm going to give you a tip and that is: Stick to the list!
- **Don't Worry About Matching** – Yes, it's fun to have a theme, but don't go overboard on having to have everything matching the theme exactly. I often compromise here when it comes to things that don't really matter. I'm not a nut to have matching theme items if I can just get something cheaper in the right color. For example, I did a boot camp theme one year and didn't want to pay extra for camo tablecloths. So, I got the cheaper green ones. I think you get the idea. Be eclectic if you want. The kids will love it all the same!

Extra Budgeting Tips

As I had mentioned earlier in this chapter, your greatest money spent will be on food, activities/crafts, and outings. I have some special tips on each of these.

Food

If you don't have the money to budget for food, you could have the parents donate all or parts of meals. This really helps with the budget and the kids are getting food that is familiar to them. Perhaps, you may just want them to donate snacks or desserts. The parents are usually accommodating because they understand that it's their kids and that camp is FREE!

Activities/Crafts

Crafts and activities are another place where you can have parents donate money or goods towards your camp. One good rule of thumb is to only plan for one or two activities/crafts per day, and let the rest be unstructured free play between cousins.

Outings

When you choose an outing for your camp, there are a few things that you can do to try to save money. Look for coupons or search the internet for discounts. Check your local paper or discount mailer. If you have a large enough group, you can always call the venue and ask if they offer a group or family discount. Another option is to check for grandparent passes or annual passes. Often that's cheaper even if you only go once during the year.

Resources in the Planner

- Budget Planning Sheet

Chapter 3:



Set Up a Schedule

Grandma Camp

*Setting up your
schedule for Grandma
Camp can be painless.
This chapter will walk
you through how to do
just that.*

Let's Get the Schedule Done!

Plan Your Schedule

We have created a sample daily schedule that you can follow and plug activities and meals into to make this part of the process quick, easy and painless! You can find it in the planner along with a blank daily schedule for you to do your own.

If this is the part that really excites you, skip our plan and do your own thing!

Here are some suggestions:

Have a Plan for Each Day

If you're like me and the thought of loosey goosey planning stresses you out, then my suggestion is to make a plan with everything written down in time slots BUT be flexible. Why? Because things don't always go according to plan and you may need to adjust or move things around. Remember, you're dealing with kids!

...Or Don't

Certainly, if you are like our Papa and would be happy just flying by the seat of your pants, more power to you. Just loosely have in mind the things you want to do and do them as time and patience dictate.

Plan Extra Time

Another suggestion that I have is to leave more time in the schedule than you think you will need. Especially when it comes to crafts and mealtimes, it ALWAYS takes longer than you think it will. If you have a craft that you think will take 10 minutes, plan for 30 (at least!). Trust me! I know what I'm talking about here!

Plan for Downtime

We always put freetime play into our schedule. It's two-fold: the kids love to have unstructured playtime together AND Papa and I need a break once in a while. (Let's face it; we're not as young as we used to be!)

Plan For Kids to Help

At our house, we love together, laugh together, play together, and...work together! The principle and value of work is something that Papa and I try to help instill in each of our grandkids. We were both taught the value of hard work, and we taught our kids the same. (So much so that when our oldest son joined the Army, he wrote home that Boot Camp was not that hard and that the Drill Sergeant didn't hold a candle to his dad. That was a proud moment for our Papa. Ha ha!)

Let's Get the Schedule Done! (cont.)

Don't be afraid to put the kids to work at appropriate times. Yes, camp is a fun time for them, but it should be a fun time for you too. And, if you are spending the entire time preparing and cleaning by yourself, it won't be much fun. Been there. . .done that!

Have the kids help with fixing and cleaning up meals, preparing crafts or activities, and cleaning up at bedtime. Remember that many hands make light work. So, make it part of the schedule. We've included a Kitchen Helper Duty Chart in the planner.

Just a note: One of the best things we have done to add a little fun into being a "helper" is to make badges that the kids wear on colorful lanyards. You can see them on the [Grandma Camp Resource Page](#).

Make Arrangements for Outings

Don't forget to plan for cars, drivers, car seats, volunteer help, etc.



We have enough grandkids that we can't all fit into one vehicle. . .and sometimes not even two! So, I arrange for enough cars so that everyone has a seatbelt or has a place for a car seat. It goes without saying that you need enough drivers for the cars also.

Keep in mind what kind of an outing it is and decide whether or not you need extra volunteers to go with you. I like to keep my ratio about 3 to 1. If you have older grandchildren who can help with the little ones, you can pair them up and you probably won't need extra adults on the outing.

Need Reservations or Appointments?

Double check to see if you need reservations or an appointment to bring a big group to wherever you are taking the kids. (This depends on the size of your group, of course.) Even if you think you know the answer to this, make the phone call anyway. You may get offered a discount or other pleasant option that you didn't know was available.

Which brings me to the next point. . .

Group Discounts

Again, even if you think you know the answer to this, ask for a discount anyway! I have been pleasantly surprised more than once by a group discount that I wouldn't have received unless I had asked.

Let's Get the Schedule Done! (cont.)

Don't Forget Plan B

ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS (did I say ALWAYS?) have a plan B in your back pocket. Even if it's just something super simple. The weather, your car, and other unforeseen circumstances may not always cooperate, and you will need to resort to Plan B.

It will give you peace of mind to know that you have an alternate idea to fill that time slot. Because if you don't end up doing Plan A, the kids will likely be disappointed. Having a Plan B can help with that.



Order/Buy Supplies

Don't wait until the last minute to get supplies for everything you need. You can often find better deals if you get things ahead of time. You won't pay for extra shipping if you are ordering things online and you can take advantage of sales.

One resource that almost everyone knows about and uses is [Amazon](#). You can find lots of things pretty fast and usually at good prices. Other places to get craft or décor supplies at good prices is Hobby Lobby (if you have one in your area) and Oriental Trading. You can order online from Hobby Lobby, but it takes a week or two to get your order. And Oriental Trading shipping is about a week.

To give you a head start, we put together all the resources on the [Grandma Camp Resource Page](#) as a place for you to find many of the things that we mention throughout this book.

Resources in the Planner

- Sample Daily Schedule
- Blank Daily Schedule (colorful & ink-friendly)
- Kitchen Helper Duty Schedule – partially filled & blank
- Supplies List
- To Do List

Chapter 4:



Let's Get Cooking

Grandma Camp

Picky eaters? Kids with allergies? No worries! We've got you covered in this section about cooking for your grandkids at camp.

Let's Get Cooking!

Planning Meals

Cooking meals with the grandkids is great when you have more time together, but when it comes to camp, you will want to spend as little time cooking and cleaning in the kitchen as possible. (That is. . .unless your theme is based on cooking. And. . .in that case, just ignore all this talk about reducing kitchen time.)

Planning meals can be the most fun part or the most frustrating part of this process depending on your attitude towards cooking and your grandchildren's attitude toward eating. Here are some ideas to make things as easy as possible for you.

Plan Your Beginning & End Outside of Mealtimes

Let's say you're doing just a weekend camp. If you start camp at 9:00 am on the first day, you can have the parents feed their kids breakfast before they come. . .that's one meal down already. Then, you can end before dinner on the second day, and that's 2 meals down. Maybe, you're starting your camp on a Friday night. Then, just plan to start right after dinnertime. I think you understand the concept.

Keep Meals Simple

I can't stress enough that if you want the meals to be quick, easy, and cheap, then keep it SIMPLE! It's kids, don't stress! They don't want or need fancy. Stick to the basics. We've included a 2-day meal planner along with a menu to help you out a bit. If you need more days, just copy the sheet and plan out all your days.

Use Holiday Favorites

If you are planning your camp connected to a particular holiday, then use that holiday for inspiration for meals.

For instance, if your camp is during Spring Break and Easter is close, make and use colored, hard-boiled eggs for one of your meals. If your camp is during the second half of Winter Break, use leftover Christmas turkey or ham in a casserole or sandwiches.

One example at our house is that the kids LOVE to make Cinnamon Twists with their Papa. It's his mother's recipe and has been a favorite in the family for as long as we can all remember. Annually, the kids come and help Papa makes dozens and dozens of them. We either make them at a weekend camp or make them ahead and freeze them. These Cinnamon Twists make for a great pairing with scrambled eggs. Easy peasy breakfast!

Let's Get Cooking! (cont.)

Get Parents Involved

As mentioned before, don't only ask the parents to donate food but to help with the planning as well.

One thing that has been helpful for us is to have the kids bring a sack lunch from home for the first day. We like to have a picnic either outdoors at our local park if the weather is nice, or a cozy indoor picnic by the fireplace if the weather is stormy or cold. Either way, that's one more meal that you don't have to make and clean up. As you can see, you could get away with only fixing 3 meals (or even none) for a 2-day camp if you get creative.

A Word About Picky Eaters

While you are planning your meals, keep in mind those picky eaters. Here are my best tips for getting kids to eat their food:

- **Plan "Pick n Choose" Meals** – These are meals that give the kids choices. Meals like taco salad, Hawaiian Haystacks, and a Panda Express style chicken bowl. These are one-bowl meals that allow kids to include the ingredients that they like and will eat added to lettuce or rice.
- **Use as Much Color as Possible** - Kids like food that looks appetizing and fun. Don't hesitate to use fruits and vegetables set out in creative ways. It may surprise you when you see a child who hates grapes eat a "caterpillar" made of grapes on a toothpick.
- **Serve Less** – Give the children smaller portions so they don't feel overwhelmed. They can always have seconds if they want it.
- **Let The Kids Help** – Kids will surprisingly eat better when they are invested in the meal. So have them help with the prep, the cooking, or even the shopping ahead of time.
- **Let Them Get Hungry** – My picky eaters tend to want to "graze" in between meals. I suggest you don't let kids do that. Kids won't die if they get a bit hungry and need to wait for the next meal. If you do need to give them something, have some small healthy snacks at the ready that you can just grab quickly.

Cooking for Kids with Allergies

Cooking for children with allergies can be quite challenging. I have a few pieces of advice if you need to deal with allergies:

- **Know What You're Dealing With** – Talk to the parents ahead of time to make sure you know everything that you need to watch out for and how to fix the child's favorites.
- **Learn to Read Ingredient Labels** – You need to know everything that is in every bit of food you fix unless the allergies are few and clear cut.
- **Homemade is Better** – Because there are so many ingredients in prepared and processed food, it is often safer to cook from scratch to avoid hidden ingredients that may set off an allergic episode.
- **Have Parents Provide the Food** – Have the parents of the child who has the allergies provide meals and food for that child.

Let's Get Cooking! (cont.)

Outdoor Cooking

Outdoor cooking can be really fun for your Grandma Camp! However, it does come with some challenges and needs extreme precaution! Here are some outdoor cooking and safety tips:

- **Make Sure the Kids Understand the Rules** – It may be a good idea to post some rules after going over them with the kids. *Make sure that they understand which things are for ADULT use only!* Emphasize that it only takes a second or two for the heat or fire to get out of hand.
- **Fire Safe Clothing** – To make clothing safe, make sure that the kids either don't have on loose hanging clothing or that they roll up sleeves, tuck in shirts, etc. Also, they should have some type of shoes on to protect the bottom of their feet.
- **Have a Fire Extinguisher Nearby** – This probably goes without saying, but you should have a fire extinguisher handy when doing any outdoor cooking. If you have older grandchildren, you may want to show them how to use it just in case.
- **Stabilize Your Cooking Area** – This would apply to any piece of equipment that will get hot – BBQ grill, portable firepit, grate over an open fire, etc.
- **Prep Everything Ahead of Time** – It is important that you prep everything and have it ready BEFORE you get the heat going. You don't want to leave the children to run in the house to look for something. As I said in the first rule, it only takes a second or two for things to get out of hand.
- **Never Leave the Children Unattended** – So, I guess this must follow the last one. **NEVER leave the children unattended with the cooking outside!!!**
- **Turn Handles Away From Kids' Reach** – This is something that we don't always think about. Besides the handles potentially being hot, if a child can reach a handle, they may pull it over on themselves.
- **Honor Their Fears** – Allow kids to be afraid of the fire and honor that fear. Do NOT force the children to hold a hot dog stick or roast a marshmallow over an open fire if they are afraid. They will learn to conquer their fear by watching the others.
- **Keep the Kids Away After the Cooking is Finished** – Children may misunderstand that things will still be hot even when the cooking is done. If you have kids that will be helping to clean up the meal, make sure that they understand that they are only to clean up the things that are unrelated to the BBQ, firepit, open fire, etc.
- **Extinguish Everything Properly** – When you are done, make sure that the BBQ grill is off or the coals are properly taken care of. Also, extinguish all fires immediately and in the proper manner to avoid sparks or ash catching nearby things on fire. Nothing should be left unattended until everything is cooled down and secured.

Resources in the Planner

- 2-Day Meal Planner Sheet
- Final Menu Sheet

Chapter 5:



Activities, Games & Fun!

Grandma Camp

If you need to know how to organize your activities for Grandma Camp, you will find suggestions for things like Opening & Closing Ceremonies, managing activities for grandchildren of multiple ages, and more!

Activities, Games & Fun!

Organizing Your Activities, Crafts & Games

I have mentioned this before, but organizing your activities can be a life saver during camp. So, I'm going to repeat it here. Keep in mind that when I refer to "activities", I mean anything that you do including crafts and games.

Take each of your individual activities (games and crafts included) and put all the components for that activity together in a container like a box or plastic bag. Also, prep as much of the activity as you can ahead of time. If you need something like scissors for multiple activities, put a sticky note or make a list of those repeated items to keep in the container with the other components. Then, you will know which things you need before you get started.

Remember that when you were planning your activities, you planned for extra time to alleviate stress. So, if things don't go as planned, don't worry. Go with it, and just have fun!

Test Out Before

If it's a craft, put one together. (It's great to have a sample to look at anyway.) If it's an activity, get your spouse or friend to help you test it out. If it's a game, know the rules well before camp.

The bottom line is to make sure you understand what you're doing so you can answer the children's questions or be able to jump in and help. It also goes a long way to try and anticipate any roadblocks or controversy beforehand.

Opening & Closing Ceremonies

One of the best things I began was to have an Opening and a Closing Ceremonies. Opening Ceremonies can give you the opportunity to go over rules and schedules and other important info. And, a Closing Ceremony give you the chance to gather your thoughts as you hug and wind down. I'm going to give you a list of what things we include in each of these ceremonies:

Opening Ceremonies

- Welcome
- Music
- Flag ceremony – post colors
- Introduce theme
- Rules and consequences
- Schedule
- Expectations
- Check-in
- Any new things for this year

Closing Ceremonies

- Wrap up of events
- Music
- Flag ceremony – retire colors
- Awards
- Thank You & acknowledgements
- Gathering craft items to take home
- Expectations
- Suggestions for next year
- Make sure everyone has belongings

Activities, Games & Fun! (cont.)

Handling Multiple Age Groups

This one is tricky. I often get asked how to manage planning activities for grandkids of multiple age groups. I don't think there is a one-size-fits-all solution, because families come in all shapes and sizes and the kids have different interests and abilities. However, I do have some tips that may help you figure things out for your group.

Probably the biggest thing to remember is that you need to find activities that are easy enough for the youngest ones and yet still interesting for the older ones. And, don't expect older children to always give in to the younger ones needs or wants, because they will see it as not being fair. You want to build positive relationships not breed resentment.

So, here are a few suggestions for managing activities for multiple ages:

- **Have Older Kids Help** – Incorporating the older kids as mentors to the younger ones usually will satisfy both groups. The younger ones will feel that they have some individual attention while the older ones will feel some importance at being needed.
- **Youth Counselors** – Have your older grandchildren take on the role of youth counselor. Let them help you plan the activities for the younger children and even involve them in prepping the activities. This will give your older grands a chance to develop some leadership skills in a safe, non-judgmental environment. They can make mistakes and have you to lovingly help them learn to correct those.
- **Parallel Activities** – You can do the same activity with different levels of ability. Make the activity a bit more challenging for the older children. For instance, you can have the younger kids playing with play dough mats and play dough and then the older ones using modeling clay who are making more permanent mini sculptures.
- **Each Takes a Part** – Have the kids do different parts of the same activity. Have the older kids do the harder part while the younger kids do an easier part. For instance, you can have the older kids make slime for the younger kids to make sensory bags.
- **Activities That Have No Boundaries** – Have some activities that really have no age boundaries such as rock painting.
- **Separate Box for the Little Ones** – When you have an activity that the younger children really can't do, you can have a separate little box with special toys for those younger ones who can play alongside while the older ones do their activity

Get the Seasonal
Spring, Summer, Fall, & Winter
Theme Packets to Host Awesome Grandma Camps!

Get Yours Today!



Chapter 6:



Preparing
For Camp

Grandma Camp

*Are you ready? Let's
find out! Just a few
more steps before you
get camp underway.*

Let's Prepare for Camp!

Now, it's time to pull it all together. Honestly, you can do all of this in just a short amount of time.

Test Your Activities & Crafts

Designate one central location for all the stuff you will be using for camp – craft supplies, games, paper goods, books (for bedtime), sleeping gear, etc.

As I have mentioned in the last chapter, test each craft or activity before camp unless it's something that you are very familiar with. Trust me on this one. . .don't skip this step!

Finalize & Print Schedule

After you go over all the details, and you are happy with the schedule, put your stamp of approval on it, and print it out. I always print one for me, and one to hang up in the central part of the house.

Plan Out Sleeping & Dressing Areas

Depending on the dynamics of your group, you may or may not decide to have separate sleeping and dressing areas. Only you can determine this, but think it through. Make arrangements to borrow any needed sleeping items.

Prep Your Home

If you are staying at your home, get things cleaned and picked up really well ahead of time. One thing is for sure, if you start with it clean, it will be easier to get it all back together when camp is over. Be sure this includes cleaning out the refrigerator and pantry space to make room for any extra food that you will need to purchase and store.

This is a good time to assess any additional childproofing that is needed. You might consider blocking off any areas that you would rather not have the kids invade.

Get Your Camera Ready

Whether you are using your phone or an actual camera, make sure that you have it charged and have plenty of room on the device or a memory card. Also, make sure you know what settings are available to you. You don't want to miss any of those cute little moments.

Let's Prepare for Camp! (Cont.)

Decide on the Rules

You need to decide on what rules you want for camp. They may be the same rules as you normally have when the kids are at your home. However, for camp, you may want to add a few rules that are specific for the situation.

Along with rules, you will want to outline exactly what consequences there will be for breaking those rules. This will have to fit within the rules that your family has probably already established. Make the consequences clear, reasonable, and few.

Some sample rules/consequences would be:

Rule – Skip out on cleaning up.

Consequence – You have to clean by yourself.

Rule – Hitting/Physically hurting someone.

Consequence – Spend time in the timeout corner, apologize & do something nice for that person.

After you get this all worked out, print out the rules and consequences and post them throughout your house or camp area in several places. You don't want ignorance or forgetfulness to be an excuse for breaking the rules.

For us, the BIG consequence is that you get sent home from camp. Thank heavens, we've never had to use that one!

A Little Pro Tip: On the flip side of this, *a great way to encourage good behavior* is to reward them. One super easy way I found to do this is to use stickers. Kids of all ages love stickers, and they're usually inexpensive! So, get some stickers that go along with your theme, and give a child a sticker when you "catch them" doing something good! I always love the positive reinforcement.

Resources in the Planner

Rules & Consequences Printable

Chapter 7:



Last Minute Prep

Grandma Camp

The day before camp starts will be busy and you will need some time to make sure all the prep is done.

Last Minute Prep

These are the things that must wait until the last minute. Generally, you will want to keep the day before camp free to get all these things done and for any last-minute items that might have been forgotten.

Buy the Food & Prep

Go out and buy the perishable food and other groceries that needed to wait until the last minute. If it's possible, do some of the cooking prep ahead of time. For instance, if you need cooked hamburger for a meal, cook it now, and put it in the refrigerator until you need it. Or, if you are using cut up veggies or fruit for a meal, cut up the ones that won't spoil between now and when you are ready to use item.

Gather Your Supplies Together

As I said before, one of the best peace-of-mind time savers that I have used is to gather all my supplies into one place. If I have more than one craft or activity, I even separate those things into their own bag or box. Then it works really well to keep all of these things in the same cupboard, closet, or corner of the room.

Having everything all together in one place will keep you from having to search your house saying: "Now, I KNOW I put that somewhere!"

Decorate with Theme Items

If you are going with a theme, chances are that you have items that you would like to put up around the house to show off the theme that you are using. Obviously, you would not want to decorate your home more than the day before (or maybe you have some really cool stuff that you want to show off to your friends 😊). Now, is the time to get all of that stuff up and ready.

Get the "Bunks" Ready

We like to set up our actual portable bunk beds for some of the kiddos, because we don't have beds for all of them. However, some like to just sleep in their sleeping bags on the floor or on the couches.

Whatever you decide you want your arrangement to be, you will want to set it up ahead of time. That way you don't waste precious time after the grandkids get there. When they arrive, they can put their things on their chosen "bunk".

Give the Schedule to the Parents

Now would be a good time to give the final schedule to the parents. This way, they know what you're doing and where you will be, just in case they need to be in touch with their kiddos.

Last Minute Prep (Cont.)

Prepare Mentally

This may sound a bit ominous, but honestly, you need to make a mental shift for this event. You need to be prepared for the fact that things will NOT always go as planned. Kids will meltdown, argue and cry occasionally. And, you probably won't be able to please everyone every step of the way. So. . .just accept all of that now and go with whatever comes up. Patience will be key!

Above all, remember to Have Fun!!

Chapter 8:



Camp Days

Grandma Camp

Remember, the two most important pieces of advice for hosting Grandma Camp are to have fun and relax!

During Camp...

Here are just a few things to think about during the actual days of your Grandma Camp.

Go Over the Rules

Make sure that you go over all the rules and consequences right at the beginning of camp so that everyone is on the same page. You want to set the expectations so that there is no question. You don't want a power struggle during camp! We like to do this during our Opening Ceremonies.

Check the Bags

Conduct a bag check when the kids first arrive. That way, you know what's in everyone's bag and that they didn't forget anything. Inevitably, there are going to be some stray items when everyone is cleaning up, and this way, you have a shot at knowing who it belongs to.

Also, you don't want to find out at bedtime that someone forgot their toothbrush or favorite stuffed animal that they just can't sleep without. *Just as a precaution, I ALWAYS keep extra new toothbrushes handy in case someone forgets theirs.*

Give Out the Responsibilities

If you are going to give the kids responsibilities, make it clear right up front. Explain that working together has a lot of benefits and will help everyone have a better time. . .including YOU! So don't be afraid to ask the kids to help. It's *their* camp and they should have some responsibility to make sure everything gets done.

Take LOTS of Pictures!

You will kick yourself if you don't take LOTS of pictures and video! Remember that this time will NEVER come back around again. The kids will only be young for so long. There are so few years that you may be able to have them all together.

One little caveat I have learned is that I get so busy or involved with the kids that I forget to take pictures sometimes. If you find that you are forgetting, assign the picture taking to someone else - a spouse, a grandchild, or a parent (if they are there helping).

The other plus is that you may want to put together a scrapbook or photo album for the kids after camp. You could also make a little montage of video for them as well. I like to use the photos to make the printed-for-you photo albums for both my own memories and gifts for the kids. (I'll talk about that in the next chapter.)

Chapter 9:



After Camp

Grandma Camp

*Whew! Camp is over. .
.now what? Well, there
are just a few things to
do to wrap it all up.*

Let's Wrap it Up!

Let the aftermath begin! Now that camp is over, you will want to do a few things to make it easier for the next time and preserve the memories from this camp.

Cleaning Up

There are two main things to do after camp is over – put things away and clean up.

I have a special [Camp Box](#) that I have dedicated for all the camp stuff that is reusable. Now, don't try washing up all the plastic ware and tablecloths, because some things are meant to be thrown away to make your life easier. I am talking about storing unused plastic tablecloths, camp signs (like kitchen helpers, a welcome sign, etc.), extra craft supplies, camp-only games, and other things that you could use for another camp.

When speaking about clean up, we could be referring to a few dishes that need to be washed, cleaning a bathroom and doing some vacuuming. On the other hand, you might be ready to declare your home a disaster area and need to call in FEMA! In the case of the latter, you may want to hire some help.

Yes, you could do a professional cleaning service if you can afford it or you can simply hire the teenager from next door for an hourly wage to come tame the mess. Whatever the case, don't be afraid to enlist some help or you may not want to do another camp EVER!



Preserve the Memories

There are many ways you can preserve some of the memories from your camp. Here are my favorites:

- **Create a photobook for gifts** (maybe birthday gifts for the next year) – you can quickly and simply create a “done for you” photobook where you upload the pictures to a photobook site and they send you back a finished bound book ready for gift-giving.

This could make a great memory gift for after camp or as a present for a birthday or other holiday. See our [Grandma Camp Resources Page](#) for suggestions for where to get these cute little photo books.

- **Make each grandchild a special ornament** – You could make a special ornament for each child commemorating your camp. This is especially nice if you are doing a camp connected with a school holiday break like Christmas.

Let's Wrap it Up! (cont.)

- **Create a journal for each grandchild** – You can make or buy a blank journal to get the kids started with writing down their own memories. You can make *your* memories from camp the first entry.
- **Make a DVD with a video montage** – If you have some video skills, you could put together a little montage of the video and photos you took at camp. Then just copy them and give them to each child as a gift.

Post-camp Thank You

Another fun idea is to send a “post-camp” Thank You! Send your grandchildren a postcard (even if they live close) thanking them for coming to camp and highlight something you noticed about them at camp. This could be a behavior, a change they made, an extra good job they did on something, something they did to be helpful, etc. Send it out in the week that follows camp.

I have included a generic template in the planner that you could use to send. Or you could create one that is related to your theme.

Evaluate

This is the easy part. You only need to go over two questions:

What worked?

What didn't?

You may think that this isn't necessary, but let me tell you, IT IS! When you want to hold your next Grandma Camp, you will definitely want to remember what worked and what didn't.

The first year, I didn't do this, and when year two came around, I made some of the same mistakes from year one. That's when I decided that I had better evaluate and write a few things down. So, that's my advice to you. . . Just do it! We've even included a handy evaluation sheet in the planner.

Resources in the Planner

- Post-camp Thank You Postcard
- Evaluation Sheet

Thank You



So . . .that's it! See? Easy peasy!

Taking the time to plan a Grandma Camp for your grandkids is so worth the effort!

Creating memories and building relationships with your grandkids will be some of the best time spent. Your grandchildren will probably not remember all the gifts you gave them or money you spent on them. But . . .they will ALWAYS remember the time they spent with you and the days at your Grandma Camp.

Thank you for taking the time to invest in the future of your family. We appreciate you bringing us along for the journey!

Happy Camping!

NanaJill

P.S. If you have more questions, we have lots of info on TheGrandkidConnection.com website:

<https://thegrandkidconnection.com/grandma-camp/>

Or . . .feel free to email me at: grandkidconnection@gmail.com

We would **LOVE** to hear your feedback!
Please take a moment and answer a
few questions for us.
(It will actually take you less than 2 minutes.)

Thank You!!

**Grandma
Camp**

The Ultimate Resource Guide
to Plan & Host Your Own Camp



[Go to Survey](#)

Copyright © 2023 by NanaJill Media. All rights reserved.

This eBook, or any portion thereof, may not be reproduced except for personal, non-commercial use. This eBook may not be used in any other manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher.

You can contact us at:

www.GrandmaCamps.com | GrandmaCamps101@gmail.com

