Parent-Teen Activity Series
Family Camping Trip

Nothing can help a relationship more than “getting away from it all” for a while. Some families often camp out while others have never done so. If you’ve never tried it, it could be fun (and challenging).

♦ This kind of trip needs some good planning to make sure it is successful. Use family dinner times, well in advance, to talk about all aspects of the family camping trip. Everyone’s ideas need to be heard. And everyone needs to be involved in planning specific parts of the trip.

♦ It may even be fun to give “titles” to each family member corresponding to their “duties” on the trip (e.g., navigator, activity director, maintenance supervisor, etc.). The main goal is to make the camping experience enjoyable for the whole family!

♦ A trip like this does not need to have every minute scheduled, but there should be some preplanned structure involved.

♦ For instance, plan to go fishing (if this is something you like to do or would like to try), but don’t worry too much about meeting an exact time schedule—go whenever it seems fun to do so.

♦ It may be that you feel your family needs this time to be alone. If so, that is what you should do. Otherwise, it could be fun to invite one or two other families to go camping with you.

How will this activity promote the parent-teen relationship?

This activity will allow parents and teens to remove themselves from the hectic nature of their daily routine and all the distractions related to normal life in order to focus on their relationship with each other.

Family discussions designed to plan for the trip will support open communication within the family.

Spending time in a secluded setting with a more relaxed atmosphere can lead to real and close family interaction.

Getting started . . .

One of the most difficult aspects of a camping trip for a family who has never done this before, is to get the right equipment. Talk to families who have been on camping trips before, invite them over for a cookout, and learn from them all you can. They may even lend you their equipment!