

## Shehaqua Family Camp in Pennsylvania - parents and children camping together

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While parents around the country sent their kids off to summer camp, parents at Shehaqua Family Camp in Hickory Run State Park, Pennsylvania rolled out their sleeping bags and sat around the campfire with their children. The idea of Family Camp came about over 20 years ago, and the camp has maintained its family-centered programs ever since.

This summer, participants from all over the East Coast attended one of three different programs offered including two week-long camps and two weekend programs between July 22 and August 6.





Like every year, the camp was filled with participants of all ages. Parents, children, and even grandparents came together to experience all the great things that camp has to offer.

“One of the most unique parts about family camp is that the participants are also involved in the many volunteer positions, so each camp is unique and every participant adds something to the overall experience,” said Laurel Nakai, Operations Director for the Shehaqua Family Core volunteer team.



Week 2 of the camp featured adult education tracks on “How to Take Care of Your Body,” by participant Conrad Scharf, and “Personal Growth and Mindfulness” by Gavin Hamnet. The weekend program this



year also featured presentations on financial, spiritual and physical health. Children enjoyed education specific to their age group, including fun activities for young children in Kindergarten and below.

The afternoons were devoted to numerous activities. Families had the opportunity to participate in an Adventure Race, a creative, camp-wide challenge race that began at the swimming pool and ended at a slip-and-slide. Crafts, group sports, hiking, and swimming at the pool or nearby lake are also favorites for children and parents alike.



The evenings at Shehaqua are a time for the whole camp to come together. This year, families enjoyed traditional activities such as a campfire and candlelight prayer in the meadow. Director of week 2, Claude Aubert, commented on the Candlelight Prayer, a staple event during family camp, “Some teens had tearful experiences, and when the groups closed the day together at the end of the night, many held long and honest conversations. For many, the candlelight prayer was the most memorable moment of the camp.” Other evening activities included a talent show and entertainment night, family challenge, and dodge ball tournament.





Amid all the activities and education, the biggest draw of the camp every year is simply the opportunity to be together with other families and friends from around the country, and sometimes even from around the world. During week 2, Director Claude Aubert reached out to former Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) members and made the weekend an informal CARP reunion. Sixteen former CARP members participated with their families, and four more came up to the camp to visit for the day. One family even came all the way from Thailand to be part of the reunion and family camp.



Currently, Shehaqua Family is gearing up for their fall programs including the Harvest Festival from September 16-18. It will be a fun, fall-themed weekend featuring pumpkin-carving and square dancing. In October, anyone who is interested in volunteering and being a part of planning programs at any level is invited to participate in the Shehaqua Summit, which will occur this year during the weekend of October 7-9 at [Camp Manatawny](#) in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Shehaqua Family runs programs all year long, and is made possible through the dedication of campers who volunteer their time and expertise to make sure that these programs will be around for years to come. For more information on programs and how to get involved, learn more at the [website](#), connect to the [Facebook page](#), or contact Laurel Nakai at [laurel.nakai@live4joy.org](mailto:laurel.nakai@live4joy.org).

