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## Summer Camp 1973: Recreation, an Approach to Behavior Modification

Christine Elizabeth Erni  
*Utah State University*

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SUMMER CAMP 1973: RECREATION, AN APPROACH

TO BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

by

Christine Elizabeth Erni

A report submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

in

Honors

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1974

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any worthwhile endeavor requires a lot of time, effort, and money, and this project was no exception. Without the support of many dedicated individuals and organizations, Summer Camp 1973 would have been impossible.

First of all, gratitude needs to be expressed to my patient family. Without their assistance, understanding, and encouragement, my involvement in this extracurricular activity would have been limited.

The special effort and time donated by various university personnel was also commendable. I was especially grateful for Dr. Devoe Rickert's contributions as faculty advisor. The project's success was largely attributed to his recommendations and guidance. Another supportive administrator was Dr. Donald Kline, Special Education Department head. His response was fantastic and appreciated. I am also thankful for the Honors Program Director, Dr. Raymond Sanders, and his secretary for their flexibility and assistance; and to both the Exceptional Child Center and the Benson Instructional Workshop staff for disseminating additional applications and information sheets.

Another source of support came from organizations who provided financial assistance. The Special Education Department and ASUSU's VOICE (Volunteer Organization for Involvement in the Community and Environment) paid for most of the expenses while Food King, a local grocery store, was gracious enough to donate the milk. Other stores also gave us substantial discounts because it was for "a good cause." Special thanks also goes to

the Environment and Man Program. They not only paid the insurance premium but also allowed me the opportunity to plan and participate in this camp while serving as a summer intern.

Finally, I cannot thank the volunteers enough for their interest and dedication. All of them were needed and appreciated. However, special recognition should be given to John Tallmadge and a group of local boy scouts. Mr. Tallmadge, a devoted Jaycee volunteer, freely offered his valuable time and services while the scouts, Scott Wyatt, Brad White, Jeff Hill, and Brian Olsen, helped provide adequate supervision.

As stated previously, Summer Camp 1973 was a successful experience due to the fact that several interested individuals sacrificed a lot of time, effort, and money. I appreciated this support. Because of it, an idea developed into a reality.

Christine Elizabeth Erni

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## INTRODUCTION

At the culmination of the highly successful first annual Bridgerland Special Olympics, the author decided that more recreational activities needed to be provided for the exceptional (handicapped) children of this area. Academic and vocational programs were rapidly increasing but little was being done to help these exceptional children develop their social and recreational skills. Besides, college students found interaction with the children from the Exceptional Child Center and the Benson Instructional Workshop to be so educational and rewarding that they wanted to plan other recreational activities. Consequently, interested students met in May 1973 to plan a summer camp for these exceptional children.

After completing some preliminary research, White (1968), Davis, et al. (1968), and Student Life (1968), it was found that USU had sponsored such a camp in 1968. The camp (White, 1968), was directed by Ernest Davis, physical education instructor for the handicapped in St. Paul, Minnesota; Dr. Devoe Rickert, USU Special Education professor; and Lois Downs, USU Health Education and Recreation professor. Obviously, this nine day camp for thirteen "mentally retarded" youth (Davis, et al., 1968), was conducted by professionals, but this did not deter our student volunteers. They were convinced that the 1973 Summer Camp could be just as educational and enjoyable as the camp held five years previously.

The 1973 Summer Camp was organized to meet the following objectives:

1. For the exceptional child:
  - a. to build a positive self image
  - b. to gain confidence and self mastery
  - c. to develop physical coordination
  - d. to encourage independence
  - e. to teach safety and conservation
  - f. to provide an opportunity to have fun
2. For the student volunteer:
  - a. to provide an occasion to work with exceptional children outside of the formal classroom
  - b. to allow students an opportunity to utilize behavior modification techniques and skills in diverse settings
  - c. to provide an opportunity to have fun with exceptional children

These objectives were selected because according to the Joseph Kennedy Foundation (n/d, p. 1) "recent scientific research has shown that physical activities ... are a major means of reaching the retarded." Through recreation, they can find success, build a positive self image, gain confidence and self mastery besides developing physically. As exceptional children improve their performance in recreational activities, they will also improve their performance "in the classroom, at home, and eventually on the job." Joseph Kennedy Foundation (n/d, p. 1). Apparently, a transfer of knowledge and skills take place--what is learned through recreation helps classroom education.

It was with these objectives in mind that a group of undergraduate students attempted to plan and conduct "Summer Camp 1973."

## PROCEDURE

After the author decided to organize a camp for exceptional children, she first selected a co-chairman, Carolyn Winter. With Mrs. Winter's assistance, volunteers were soon contacted, and the committee met to plan the event. Regular meetings were scheduled for Mondays at 5:00 pm. The weekly meetings commenced on June 18, the first session of summer school and continued until July 23, the week of the camp.

The next step involved selection of a date and location for the camp. The committee preferred to hold the camp on July 27, 28, and 29 for three reasons. First, it avoided a holiday weekend when the canyon would be over populated with other campers. Secondly, it would be during the first week of the second session of summer quarter, a time students could easily fit into their schedules. Thirdly, most education students did not have Friday classes and were readily available for a Friday, Saturday, Sunday camping trip. The committee also confirmed Green Canyon as a site for the 1973 Summer Camp because it was relatively isolated yet close to campus if emergencies arose.

Next, responsibilities were delegated to the various committee members. Assignments were designated as follows:

1. Activities:

- a. hiking
- b. camp skills, i.e., lashing, digging and maintaining latrines, building fires, etc.
- c. nature observations



- d. campfire programs:
  - e. recreation, i.e., volleyball, frisbees, softball, inner tubes, kickball, soccer.
  - f. camp crafts
2. Correspondence:
    - a. information sheets and applications
    - b. parent releases
  3. Fire permit
  4. Insurance
  5. Food:
    - a. menus
    - b. purchasing
    - c. supervision of preparation and cleanup
  6. Equipment
  7. Publicity
  8. Training of volunteers
  9. Arranging optional university credit
  10. Transportation
  11. Church Services
  12. Photography

Each individual committee member selected one or more of the above areas as his assigned task. Although, the students could solicit help from other resources, each was held responsible for his specific area and reported his progress at the weekly meetings. In other words, committee members assumed the role of sub-committee chairmen.

It should be noted, however, that all of the assignments were not delegated to university students. For example, Dr. Devoe Rickert, USU Special Education professor, accepted the invitation to conduct the training session and supervise the camp since he was well qualified to teach both camp skills and behavior modification techniques. Because we needed more male volunteers, John Tallmadge, a local Jaycee, offered to help coordinate our efforts with the Boy Scouts of America. Thirdly, publicity was handled through the expertise of Linda Keith, a staff member of USU's Information Services.

Insurance and much of the transportation arrangements were also handled by non-student affiliated organizations. For example, group insurance was contracted through Hatch Insurance (Continental) with the Environment and Man Program paying the premium. Transportation was provided by the USU Motor Pool (stationwagon), the National Guard (truck), the Exceptional Child Center (van), and other community volunteers (stationwagon and sedans).

Although one of the objectives of the camp was to allow students an opportunity to utilize behavior modification techniques and skills in diverse settings, formal data was not collected from the volunteers. This procedure was followed because: (1) Most of the volunteers came from either the Special Education or Psychology Departments and were already well skilled in using behavior modification. (2) Behavioral changes came primarily in the affective domain which is relatively difficult to measure and chart. (3) The staff wanted to concentrate its efforts upon providing an enjoyable experience for the exceptional children and for themselves. They did not want to be concerned with paperwork while camping in the canyon.

Even though no concrete data was collected, several interesting experiences involving behavioral changes were noted. These will be discussed in the results section.

After plans were firmly established, parents of the students enrolled at both the Exceptional Child Center and the Instructional Workshop were contacted by telephone and informed about the camp. The author was careful about calling only those parents who had children at least ten years old. This procedure was followed for three reasons: (1) to enroll children who were mature enough to profit from a camping experience, (2) ten year olds are usually toilet trained, and (3) for financial and supervisory reasons, the camp would be limited to approximately twenty children, ten boys and ten girls.

Because most of the questions were answered by a personal contact over the telephone, little follow-up work needed to be done. Application, information, and parent release forms were mailed to each family ten days before the camp. Return of these forms (along with a \$2.00 fee) indicated a more concrete commitment. Until this time, we had no idea exactly how many children to expect.

Wednesday evening before the camp, Dr. Rickert met with all volunteers. He went over camp procedures and reviewed the final details. It was pointed out that the philosophy of the camp was to let the exceptional children do what they could. They would be responsible for pitching tents and setting up camp, meal preparation and cleanup, and building the fires. Adults would provide help only when absolutely needed. Although many activities were planned, the camp would remain unstructured. The staff would utilize behavior modification techniques but would never force a child to do something he did not want to do.

## RESULTS

All special campers and staff members were scheduled to meet at the Exceptional Child Center at 12:00 noon on Friday, July 27, immediately after the ECC students were dismissed from classes. After taking roll and assigning the exceptional children to volunteers, sack lunches were distributed to each individual. The delegation then walked to the quad where they ate their lunches. Before returning to the Exceptional Child Center, ice cream cones were purchased at the dairy.

While the exceptional children were busy enjoying their lunches, the author and a few other staff members remained at the ECC to pack camping gear and to wait for the return of the ECC van. Since only those children ten years of age or older were invited to participate, the van was required to make its regular route and drop off the children not eligible for the camp before it could return to campus for our use.

As the exceptional children came back to the ECC, they were sent to the restroom and then assigned to either the van, station wagon or sedans. Our departure was delayed somewhat because the staff miscalculated the time it took for the children to walk to and return from the quad. Instead of leaving at 12:45 pm as originally planned, the group departed at 1:30 pm.

However, this delay proved to be a fortunate occurrence. One of the parent's telephoned and asked if her son could still attend the camp. Originally, she had refused permission for him to participate in any extra-curricular activities but had changed her mind due to the fact

that her son was sitting on the curb at home with his sleeping bag and guitar. Apparently, the excitement of his peers at school had influenced his behavior. He was determined to go with his friends even if his parents did not approve. In other words, a child's response changed parental attitudes--what a perfect example to illustrate indirect behavior modification!

Unfortunately, this particular boy developed an extreme case of diarrhea while at camp. Since we cleaned him with cold water and he had no other clothes to change into, we were forced to send him home after the first day. Besides, exceptional children have low resistance, and we were afraid that he might contract a respiratory illness along with his diarrhea.

Other than the fact that the University Center forgot to pack tent poles along with some of their tents, setting up camp went smoothly. The special campers pitched their tents, pumped up their air mattresses, and rolled out their sleeping bags. Some of the campers even collected rocks and designed pathways from their tents to the campfire area. Later, the campers helped with meal preparation and cleanup.

Although, the camp's philosophy was to let the exceptional children do as much as possible with a minimum of adult interference, the staff did too much at first for them. In fact, the author learned a valuable lesson from observing one of the older special campers. She had been asked to take a boy afflicted with cerebral palsy to the latrine. Normally, he had been lifted from the ground and guided by one of the staff members; but this special camper handled the situation quite differently. In a firm voice she commanded him to get up saying, "You're

not a cripple. You can go to the bathroom by yourself." Following behind him, she marched him up to the latrine without even holding his hand.

It was obvious that the boy could do more than we had originally expected; and so the staff's behavior abruptly changed. From that time on, the boy was required to serve and feed himself besides take care of his other needs. Because of this incident, the staff not only demanded more from the boy but also from the rest of the special campers.

Since the camp was unstructured, the exceptional children were free to participate in any activity they desired as long as they were accompanied by one of the staff. However, the twenty-two camper's interests varied as much as their ages (10 to 46). Consequently, several activities such as hiking, arts and crafts, kickball, and jumping on the inner tubes were being supervised simultaneously.

Because we lacked sufficient male volunteers to sleep with the special campers, scouts were recruited to assist us. Although they were quite young (11-13 years old), they assumed a great deal of the supervisory responsibilities----eating, hiking, sleeping and working with the exceptional children.

The scouts were also able to reach these campers in ways impossible by adults. For example, one exceptional child's behavior changed dramatically because of his camping experiences. This child always exhibited inappropriate behaviors upon leaving his home. According to his parents, it was a pain to take him traveling because he would always sulk and complain "When are we going to go home?" At the beginning of the camp, he again demonstrated such inappropriate behaviors but they were ignored and praise given instead for participation in

group activities. The scouts played an important part in modifying his behavior for they were in a position to immediately reinforce his appropriate responses while still being able to maintain an inobtrusive "peer" relationship.

Later on this particular camper became less introverted and willingly shared his talents (imitations of famous people) during the campfire programs. He soon developed more self confidence than any other exceptional child in the group. In fact, when the Order of the Arrow Scouts presented their campfire program, he was the first camper who volunteered to participate in the snake dance with the "Indian" scouts. Because of his initial leadership, the rest of the campers eventually joined in and followed his example.

While breaking camp, some of his inappropriate behaviors again returned but were routinely ignored. However, upon returning to the Exceptional Child Center, he was still sulking. Thinking that possibly his feelings had been hurt in camp at the last minute, the author approached the boy to find out what had occurred. Surprisingly, the boy exclaimed with tears in his eyes, "I don't want to go home. I had so much fun in the canyon, I want to go back." What a dramatic change in attitude!

A few weeks later this boy's mother approached the author and expressed her thankfulness for the boy's modification of behavior. Apparently, they had made a recent trip to visit their daughter and her family. This time he exhibited no inappropriate behaviors. In fact, they claimed that he was now a delightful traveler.

Similar changes, even if not so dramatic, occurred in the other campers as well. This became evident the last night at the campfire when each camper told what he liked the best about camp. Although responses did include such things as "the food," "hiking," "sleep," and the "outdoors," one girl revealed her newly acquired sense of independence by saying "leaving my parents at home."



## CONCLUSION

After critiquing the 1973 Summer Camp, the committee found that its original objectives indeed had been achieved. The exceptional children were able to (1) gain a more positive self image, (2) gain confidence and self mastery, (3) develop more physical coordination, (4) become independent, (5) learn about safety and conservation, and (6) experience a lot of fun. Besides this, the camp provided the student volunteers with an opportunity to (1) work with exceptional children outside of the formal classroom, (2) utilize behavior modification skills and techniques in diverse settings, and (3) have fun with exceptional children.

True, not every child exhibited a marked behavioral change upon returning home from camp. But each child and volunteer developed a lasting relationship----a bond of friendship that will never be broken nor forgotten. Because of this and other reasons, a vow was made to make this event an annual activity. Even though new experiences will dominate next year's camp, its participants will still be able to support the statement that recreation is an approach to behavior modification.

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APPENDIXES

Dear Parents,  
The students of  
this school  
will be  
learning  
about  
the importance  
of  
the

Appendix A  
Letters to Parents, Information,  
and Parent Release Forms

July 18, 1973

Dear Parents,

The Student Council for Exceptional Children and VOICE of Utah State University are co-sponsoring a summer camp for exceptional children on July 27, 28, and 29. The participants will leave the Exceptional Child Center at 12:00 noon on Friday, July 27 and will return to the ECC by 12:00 noon on Sunday, July 29. The camp will be located in Green Canyon and a variety of activities have been planned.

Throughout the camp, the participants will have an opportunity to learn by doing. They will be involved in helping prepare the campsite, pitch their own tents and help with meal preparation. It is felt that this will enable the child to gain a great deal more from the experience than if everything is more or less done for him.

If you want to enroll your child for this camp, please fill out the enclosed Information Sheet and Parent Release Form and mail them to:

VOICE Summer Camp  
ASUSU Activity Center  
Utah State University  
Logan, Utah 84321

Most of the expenses are being paid for by various organizations, but we still need to charge a \$2.00 fee per applicant to cover remaining cost. Parents are also expected to transport their child to and from the Exceptional Child Center. If you cannot bring or pick up your child, please contact Chris Erni at 752-4100 ext. 7644 or 752-4660 to make other arrangements.

Please mail the forms as soon as possible. In order to provide a good experience we need to limit our enrollment to 20 children. Because of this, we have set July 23 as the deadline date for applications. If your letter is received after this time, it will be considered only if we do not yet have 20 children signed up.

We hope that your child can participate with us.

Sincerely,

*Christine Erni*

Christine Erni

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE CAMPERS

1. The participants will receive the following meals during the camp:

Friday:

lunch  
supper

Saturday:

breakfast  
lunch  
supper

Sunday:

breakfast

2. Items participants need to bring:

- a. Sleeping bag and pillow
- b. Old clothes suitable for camping such as long pants, shirt, hat, etc.
- c. Sturdy shoes for hiking
- d. Warm coat or jacket (evenings and mornings are often chilly)
- e. Toiletries such as toothbrush and paste, soap, wash cloth and towel, comb, etc.
- f. Pajamas
- g. Any other items the child might need or want to take along.

## INFORMATION SHEET

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contacts (In case of illness or accident)

1. Give a telephone number other than your own, \_\_\_\_\_  
and give the person's name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Place of employment:  
Father's \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Family physician \_\_\_\_\_  
Office phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital phone \_\_\_\_\_
4. In case of emergency, the camp reserves the right to place calls to the family physician if the emergency numbers listed can not be reached.

Restrictions

1. Medication? \_\_\_\_\_ If so what? \_\_\_\_\_  
In what dose? \_\_\_\_\_ How often (when) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Check if applicant had any of the following:  
Measles \_\_\_\_\_, Mumps \_\_\_\_\_, Polio \_\_\_\_\_, Chicken Pox \_\_\_\_\_,  
Whooping Cough \_\_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Does the applicant wear glasses? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Does he/she have any other restrictions such as allergies? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please list them: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

## PARENTS RELEASE

I hereby give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the Summer Camp to  
be held July 27, 28, and 29.

In the event that my child/ward should for any reason  
require any medical treatment and/or medication during his  
participation, I give my permission for such treatment.

I hereby grant USU's Special Education Department  
permission to take pictures and release news copy at their  
discretion. Pictures will be taken by the official camp  
photographer.

Anyone involved in anyway with this camp are hereby  
released from any responsibility or liability for any  
injury or illness including transportation to and from  
Green Canyon.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Appendix B

Budget

## Budget

## Expenses

Food	160.00
Art supplies	25.00
Equipment Rental	78.00
Insurance	25.00
Photographer	50.00
Miscellaneous (fuel, rope, utensils, etc.)	16.47

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Total 354.47

## Income

Fee	44.00
Environment's Man Program	25.00
ASUSU	144.47
Special Education Department	141.00

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Total 354.47

Appendix C

Camp Roster

## CAMP ROSTER

Boys

Martin Gardner  
 Ronald Lamb  
 Dale Jenkins  
 Tex Jenkins  
 Drew Rawlins  
 Brad Rose  
 Larry Sadler  
 Ladell Shepherd  
 Randy Carter  
 Scott Larsen

Girls

Patty Firth  
 Alice Smuin  
 Dovelean Shawn  
 Ella Jean Cooper  
 Lorna Riches  
 Melanie Romriell  
 Sherry Sorenson  
 Rhonda Morrison  
 Dorothy Hendry  
 Sherry Williamson  
 Shirley Bowman  
 Elaine Groll

VolunteersFull Time

Dr. Devoe Rickert  
 Richard Weiss  
 Bill Warner  
 Phillip Muller  
 Debi Muller  
 Carolyn Winter  
 Barbara Andrew  
 Donna Baker  
 Chris Erni

Part Time

John Tallmadge  
 Shauna Mecham  
 Corrine Crutcher  
 Doug Oldroyd  
 Dennis Burns (and wife)

Scouts

Scott Wyatt  
 Brad White  
 Jeff Hill  
 Brian Olsen

Photographer

John Dziadecki

Appendix D

Camp Menus

## CAMP MENUS

## Friday

Lunch	Sack lunch Bologna Sandwich Cookies Can of pop Orange Ice cream cone (from dairy)
Dinner	Sloppy Joes Potato chips Pork and Beans Milk Doughnuts
Campfire snacks	Some-mores (graham crackers--hershey chocolate--marshmallows)

## Saturday

Breakfast	Orange Juice Hot Cocoa Bacon Scrambled Eggs Doughboys (biscuits on a stick) Jelly and butter
Lunch	Hot dogs Hot dog buns Fritos Lemonade Celery-carrot stocks
Afternoon break	Watermelon slices
Dinner	Foil Dinner Hamburger Potatoes Onions Carrots Hostess Apple Pie Rolls & oleo Milk
Campfire treats	Banana Boats Bananas, Chocolate chips, mini-marshmallows

## Sunday

---

Breakfast	Pancakes oleo, syrup Orange Juice Scrambled Eggs Hot Cocoa Fried potatoes
Anytime snacks	Carrot sticks Celery sticks Bread and oleo and jelly Peanut butter sandwiches Fruit concentrate drink

---

Appendix E

Arts and Crafts



## ARTS AND CRAFTS

1. Sit-up-on's:  
interwoven newspapers covered with plastic.
2. Name tags:  
wooden disks with hole drilled in center for string (to be worn as a necklace), decorated with felt tipped pens and modge-podged.
3. Spray pictures:  
paint splattered on paper using a toothbrush and screen.
4. Crayon etchings:  
paper placed over rocks or other rough items, crayons rubbed across top of paper to reproduce texture.
5. Painted rocks:  
rocks painted with tempura and brush, modge-podged for gloss.
6. Laterns:  
punch holes into tin can with nails and hammer, put a candle in the bottom and hang with a piece of wire.
7. Book Marker:  
press leaves, butterflies, etc. between two sheets of clear contact paper, cut out with scissors.

Appendix F

Articles and News Releases

Logan, Utah, Sunday, July 22, 1973

## Children Will Go Camping

Twenty Cache Valley children will be treated to a special camping trip this week in Green Canyon.

The children, 10 years old and up, are from the Utah State University Exceptional Child Center and the Cache Instructional Workshop.

The outing is the first of its kind in five years around Logan and is co-sponsored by the Student Council for Exceptional Children at USU and VOICE, the volunteer services arm of USU student activities.

Chris Erni and Carolyn Winters, co-chairmen of the project, said the children will arrive at the open meadows at the top of Green Canyon about noon Friday.

"Our philosophy is to let the kids do what they can. They will be responsible for pitching tents and setting up camp. The 15 adults who will accompany the special campers will provide help only when needed," Chris explained. The children will help with meal preparation and cleaning up afterwards.

Many activities are planned for the children although the camp's philosophy will be to keep things instructed—no child is forced to do things he doesn't care to do. Adults will be in charge of hiking, teaching camp crafts, camp skills and nature observation, to name a few.

# Special Camp Out For Special Kids





*Photos By Linda Keith*





**TWENTY CACHE** Valley children spent the weekend at a special camp in Green Canyon. The exceptional children, 10-years-old and up, are from the Utah State University Exceptional Child Center and the Cache Instructional Workshop. The outing was co-sponsored by the Student Council for Exceptional Children at USU and VOICE, the volunteer services arm of USU activities. Quiet moments to enjoy a friend, pictures on the far right, were part of the camping experience. The youngsters also had to pitch their own tents during the three-day "roughing it" trip which began Friday. The kids were free to find their own fun in the meadows of upper Green Canyon. Logan merchants supplied food and other camping supplies while USU's student volunteer organization provided most of the manpower and camping equipment.



photo by Linda Keith

For many of the kids, this was the first opportunity for them to spend some time in the mountains.

## Outing for 'exceptional children'

A dead end road in Green Canyon, seven miles from the Utah State University campus, led to the site of a unique wilderness camp. It was the site of an enjoyable experience in the lives of twenty-one handicapped students.

They left USU last July 27 for a three day camping trip. The students ranged in age from ten to forty-six and were from the Cache Instructional Workshop and the USU Exceptional Child Center. The outing was sponsored by USU's Student Council for Exceptional Children and by VOICE, a student volunteer organization.

"The camp developed independence, built self-esteem, taught safety and conservation and was just plain FUN for the kids," commented Dr. Rickert advisor to the group and Educational Director of the Exceptional Child Center.

Chris Erni and Carolyn Winter, co-chairmen of the project were assisted by 15 volunteers. John Tallnadge, A Logan Jaycee member, and four scouts also accompanied the group.

"The scouts, Scott Wyatt, Brad White, Jeff Hill and Brian Olsen were just great with the kids," said Chris Erni. "Although they were only 11, 12, and 13 years old they assumed a great deal of responsibility — eating, sleeping, hiking, and working with the exceptional children. They were also able to reach these students in ways impossible by adults."

The philosophy of the camp was to let the students do as much as possible by themselves. They helped pitch tents, build fires, fix meals and clean up the camp site. The adults who accompanied the special campers were instructed to provide help only when it was needed.

"At first, explained Carolyn Winter, "we did too much for them. We found that they were capable of doing more than we thought."

Many activities were planned for the students although the camp's goal was to remain unstructured with no specific bedtime, no bugle call in the morning and no fixed meal times. Adults and the scouts were in charge of hiking, teaching camp crafts, camp skills and nature observations; but no child was forced to do things he did not care to do.

Campfire programs were the highlight of both evenings. Friday night Order of the Arrow scouts, under the direction of Randy Gardner, performed for the students and taught them Indian dances. Musical numbers were also presented by USU students. Several of the special campers also contributed to the program by sharing songs and impersonations. Saturday night, Linda Vida, A skilled story teller, entertained the students.

The last night at the campfire each student told what he liked the best about camp. Responses included such things as "the food", "sleep", "hiking", and the "outdoors". One student commented that he liked "leaving my parents at home."

"We would like to see this camp become an annual affair," Chris said. "The university and local merchants were most generous in helping us prepare for the camp. The Environment and Man program paid for the insurance premium, and Smith's Food King donated the milk. Besides the Special Education Department and ASUSU provided equipment and funds."

## An Exceptional Camp-out ! !

Carolyn Winter

It would be a toss-up to say who the camp provided the greatest experiences for--the campers or the counselors. For the counselors it was their first experience camping with exceptional youth. For all but one or two of the campers, camp was a first for them also. The lack of experience was obvious at times when one volunteer arrived at the camp and offered all sorts of suggestions gleaned from being a camp director--we were using paper cups and going through them as fast as the water. Her suggestion was to put names on the bottoms of the cups and hang them up by clothespins on a wire. Great suggestion to remember to use next time since we had neither wire nor clothespins. She constructed the wash area by lashing two poles to two trees on which could be sat the wash basins and on the end of which a paper towel was anchored complete with a plastic bag over it to protect it from the rain.

The lack of experience was not apparent except for a few little details --like when we got ready to set up the tents and found out we didn't have the poles and pegs for some of them and a big black cloud was threatening to soak us and everything we had.

The children were 10 years old and older and there were 23 of them. There were approximately 9 to 14 counselors --the number varied because some of them did not spend the total time up there but came and went. Of invaluable assistance by his presence and because of his past experiences was the student advisor to SCEC, Dr. Devoe Rickert.

He was great--he was there to support and he did that by pitching in and cooking when needed, and being generally supportive in all our endeavors --most of all he was a friend to campers and counselors. By relating to the campers as he did he was a model after which we could pattern.

One fringe benefit to the counselors was the campfires after the campers were tucked snugly in. Counselors sat up and talked and joked and got to see and listen to Devoe Rickert the man as well as listen to and challenge his educational philosophies.

One experience which meant a great deal to me was concerning a youth about 12. There were four scouts there who were "normal" and who were supposed to be of help to us in hiking, setting up tents, campfires, etc. They were about 11-12 years in age. I had not yet become acquainted with who were scouts and who were campers--not knowing all of them previously.

Thinking one of the campers was a scout I asked him to pump up one of the inner tubes for me. He refused. I again asked him to pick up something and take it to one of the tents. He again refused. Getting a little angry, thinking that these "scouts" were supposed to be up here to help, I replied, "We brought you scouts up here to be of help to us and to the campers. Now, if you can't help you can just go home." I mentioned this encounter to another counselor who had had a similar experience with this boy and we agreed he should be given another chance so I asked him to take some camp gear to a tent since it had begun to sprinkle. After he had begrudgingly picked up the gear and moaned his way to the tent, one of the counselors who had registered the



campers and knew who he was said, "But he is one of the campers!" Now that was a learning experience I'll never forget. I did not know the "label" (ED). I expected him to behave "normally" and he did. He showed no signs of any "deviance" during the Friday-Sunday outing. I found him to be a delightful youth and he enjoyed himself throughout his stay. I was a little disappointed to learn that even we who should know better react to "labels."

Dr. Rickert gave us the ultimate compliment when he said that our camp was as good as those previously when experienced camp directors had been hired to run camp. There were no paid counselors or directors--all were volunteer students from the Departments of Special Education or Psychology and one was an interested citizen who went the extra mile to be of assistance to us. We need more citizen advocates like him!

Without the Head of the Department of Special Education, Dr. Donald Kline, camp might have been impossible. He provided us with the backing necessary to make this venture a success. His backing consisted not only of enthusiasm for the camp, but with financial assistance from the nearly depleted coffers of the Department. There was a small stipulation--the monies were in advance from funds SCEC hopes to receive in the fall. Also, Dr. Kline's interest in furthering student involvement with children further prompted him to support the camp. And considering all the activities of the newly formed SCEC which he has supported, we feel he is the greatest and thank him profusely.

Thinking back we commented on the lack of arguments or friction between the campers and were awed

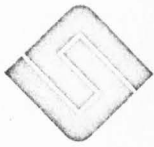
by the politeness of the campers. "Thank you's" were said when campers received their meals, and again as they bid us good-bye when picked up by their parents.

Since the campers had a wide range of ages and abilities--and considering the limited staff, it wasn't possible to do all things we planned. For instance, some of the campers wanted to really go out and "hike" but there were so many who wanted to take the easy way and so many others who were not physically capable of rugged hiking, the lack of counselors necessitated the use of the easy paths. We hiked with a counselor at the lead, one about the middle, and one who brought up the rear. Using Dr. Rickert's suggestion, we planned to take back any hiker who became too tired to go on by having one of the counselors say, "Whew! This is tiring, I think I'll go back to camp. Anybody else want to go back with me?" It was put to use, and the field test validated its usefulness--ability to redeem an ego.

We wanted a close one-to-one relationship as much as possible so that the campers could talk at will and know that this someone was interested in them and what they had to say. This seemed to be one of their most urgent needs which we hope was fulfilled at this camp.

There were no hard and fast guidelines set up for campers regarding how their time was to be spent. However, camp crafts were provided for those who seemed interested in doing them. Of special interest for most of them was weaving boondoggle into chains for necklaces for their admired counselors, and painting rocks for themselves, families, and possibly their favorite teachers at school.

# News



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## TWO-DAY CAMPING TRIP PLANNED FOR SPECIAL KIDS

LOGAN--Twenty Cache Valley children will be treated to a special camping trip next week in Green Canyon. The kids are pretty special, too.

The children, 10-years old and up, are from the Utah State University Exceptional Child Center and the Cache Instructional Workshop. The outing is the first of its kind in five years around Logan and is co-sponsored by the Student Council for Exceptional Children at USU and VOICE, the volunteer services arm of USU student activities.

Chris Erni and Carolyn Winters, co-chairman of the ambitious project plan to have the children arrive at the open meadows at the top of Green Canyon about noon Friday.

"Our philosophy is to let the kids do what they can. They will be responsible for pitching tents and setting up camp. The 15 adults who will accompany the special campers will provide help only when needed," Chris explained. The children will help with meal preparation and cleaning up afterwards.

Many activities are planned for the children although the camp's philosophy will be to keep things unstructured--no child is forced to do things he doesn't care to do. Adults will be in charge of hiking, teaching camp crafts, camp skills and nature observation, to name a few.

more

TWO-DAY CAMPING TRIP--Keith  
2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2

It has taken two months of dedication to bring the camp into reality, but Chris reflects the emotions of all involved when she says, "I am so excited about camping with these children and helping them find out just how self-sufficient they can be."

Campfire programs both nights in Green Canyon are planned for the kids. A group of Scouts from several local troops have volunteered their time to help throughout the camp.

"Of the six boys, ages 13-20 who will be helping out with the camp, several are in the Order of the Arrow, a prestigious group of scouts well-qualified in camping skills. Their training is steeped in the lore of the Indian and they will be on the campfire program," said John Tallmadge who has arranged for the scouts to help.

"We would like to see this camp become an annual affair," Chris said. "The university and local merchants have been most generous in helping us provide for the camp. The Environment and Man program has offered to pay the required insurance premiums; USU's Harmonious Living Center is donating tents and sleeping bags; and local grocers have given food."

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