

## COUSINS CAMP HOW-TO

### INTRODUCTION AND KEY GOALS:

Do you have memories of childhood times spent with cousins, and you still smile when they come to mind? Perhaps “in the olden days” when scads of cousins lived and worshiped in a relatively small area—at least in the same state, those times occurred naturally. Perhaps a few times a year you got together with cousins when grandparents and even great-grandparents celebrated an anniversary or holiday. In this day of widely separated family units, together times need to be more intentional.

“If we didn’t have Cousins Camp, we wouldn’t be this close. We definitely need it for that.” PK/14

We’ve seen it in your eyes at our mention of “cousins camp.” That spark of deep desire to be connected with your siblings and cousins and to give that gift to your own children. Beyond your children’s developing tangible long-lasting relationships with cousins, they will begin developing an intangible gratefulness for their common heritage and a grounded-ness they need as this fluid society swirls around them. In a time of the rapid breakdown of the nuclear family, we are praying God will use your efforts and ours to strengthen the ties of mutual support among family members through this extended family project.

A top memory of all the boys: “piling onto each other ... making a stack of three sitting on each other’s shoulders in the water.” CR

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A worthy immediate goal for cousins camp is that each child, each year, will return home a little more mature—a little less dependent and clingy than before. When they experience a few days without mom or dad in a safe and secure loving atmosphere, they become a little more confident in their own abilities and a little more experienced at helping and cooperating with others.

Of course, some of these goals can be partially achieved in similar situations like scout camps, day camps and retreats or church youth camps. But we’re talking about family here. There are plenty of opportunities to grow independence independently, but to grow f-a-m-i-l-y is a totally other thing.

“At the end-of-Cousins-Camp celebration party we had a special meal that the kids had helped with.” CA

Investing your prayers and time and resources in building up your family is perhaps one of the very best investments you can make. We’d like to give you a starting point that is highly adaptable to your own unique situation, number of participants, adult helpers available, etc. Come along for an adventure that will fuel a lifetime of warm family memories for your children and/or grandchildren.

“Cousins Camp was very intentional to bring family together; otherwise, it just doesn’t happen.” BW

### KEY GOALS FOR COUSINS CAMP:

- **To strengthen the bond of the extended family.**
- **To strengthen our individual families** by supporting one another and cooperating on this Cousins Camp Project.
- **To give our children rich experiences** that will enhance their self-esteem, success in the classroom, and indeed, in life.
- **To offer our children a wide variety of experiences** in different settings and activities with the mutual support of family—thereby taking away, or at least lessening, the fear of trying new things.

“Truly priceless: the importance of stories/memories of the ‘epic battles’ of cousins camp.” AA

For example: hiking, exploring, fishing, camping, etc., in the outdoors, at a zoo, or sports event. Or introducing a new skill or hobby such as golf, archery, art, sewing, music, etc.!

- **To grow healthy well-adjusted individuals.**
- **To the degree you are free to do so, share your faith and the gospel by word and deed in every aspect of Cousins Camp.**

In a very real way, a cousins camp with these goals can be the working out of our faith and delivering in a nutshell an opportunity for our kids to experience Luke 2:52.

### Theme Verse

“And Jesus grew  
In wisdom  
And stature  
And in favor with God and men.”  
Luke 2:52