

Shmanners 525: Summer Camp

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Travis: Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to Shmanners!

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette.

Travis: For ordinary occasions. Hello, my d—I wanted to kind of hit it like, yeah, you?!

Teresa: Oh?

Travis: You're listening to Shmanners, no doubt about it.

Teresa: Oh, okay?

Travis: A little sassier than I normally do.

Teresa: I mean, yes.

Travis: Is that how it came across?

Teresa: Definitely.

Travis: I can't always pull off sassy, so that felt good.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: It felt right.

Teresa: I think you did it. [chuckles]

Travis: You know? I nailed it.

Teresa: I mean, I was definitely like—

Travis: You felt sass?

Teresa: I did, I did.

Travis: I'm sorry. That's why I don't normally do it.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I feel terrible now. What if I made our listeners—hey, thanks for listening to Shmanners. Is that better?

Teresa: That was a little better.

Travis: I really appreciate it.

Teresa: Nicer.

Travis: It's—hey, you... you're... yeah. You are listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: We are.

Travis: *Thank you.* Hi.

Teresa: Hi. [chuckles]

Travis: What are we even talking about?

Teresa: [chortles]

Travis: What's happening?

Teresa: Well, I know—I know that summer for a lot of people is almost over.

Travis: Yeah, the dog days are almost over.

Teresa: Yes. We're into August now. But we have another summer-tastic episode for you.

Travis: *Ah!*

Teresa: So, we did the All-American Road Trip.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And we—

Travis: The All-American rejects.

Teresa: No.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: We didn't do those. And we did the State Fair, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And so another American summer tradition is summer camps.

Travis: They don't do summer camps other places?

Teresa: No, they do. But there's a specific history here of them.

Travis: Okay. Did you do summer camp?

Teresa: I did day camps. And I did summer camps like with scouts, which counts.

Travis: Yeah, I wasn't going to argue with you. You said that like—

Teresa: Okay!

Travis: "And that's real!" And I was like, yeah!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It is! I did Southern Baptist summer camp.

Teresa: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Church camp.

Travis: Awanas. It's like Awanas, I think. And I remember going, I was like 10 or 11—

Teresa: It was sleep away though, right?

Travis: Yeah, yeah, yeah!

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: For like a week or two. I can't remember. But once again, so my memory is not great—

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Right? But I'll have memories from it. But all I can think now about it—

Teresa: No, your memory is—okay, wait a minute. We need to clarify. The memories themselves are not bad memories.

Travis: They're not bad. No, my memory—

Teresa: Your memory—

Travis: My ability—

Teresa: Your recollection.

Travis: My ability to recall things on purpose—

Teresa: Okay, there it is. [chuckles]

Travis: Are not the strongest.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: But when they hit, they hit ri—it doesn't matter, I don't have to defend myself to you or anybody.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: I'm my own man. I'm a grown up. I'm not afraid of you guys anymore. Anyways, I—when I look back on it, I'm like, why... in what way was this a good idea? You know?!

Teresa: Oh, really?

Travis: I just think about like, we've just sent like 60 12-year-old kids to like be looked after by some 22-year-old kids or whatever and like, the fact that we didn't get lost in the woods or caught on fire, or attacked by bears? Crazy. Right now—and listen, maybe this is just a different generational parenting. If someone said, yeah, send Bebe away for like two wee—you'll have no idea what's going on, I'll be like, oh, you don't want me to sleep? Oh, okay, cool, great, great, great.

Teresa: Well, we're going to talk about how people do continue to sleep while their children are away.

Travis: Okay, let's do it.

Teresa: Well, first I wanted to talk about one of my favorite camps. I went to Girl Scout camp called Camp Whippoorwill, and it was so much fun. I have so many amazing memories of doing crafts and canoeing, and sitting out further away from the fire than most people because—

Travis: Asthma. Yeah.

Teresa: Yeah, hurts my... hurts my lungs.

Travis: I think your memories of camp were a lot more fun, because there was less Jesus guilt associated with them.

Teresa: There was hardly any.

Travis: While ours would be like, hey, yeah, oh, let's build a fire and do smores, and now a 30 minute speech about how you're full of sin.

Teresa: Oh, no, none of those.

Travis: Yeah, okay, yeah, yours was probably more enjoyable though.

Teresa: It was.

Travis: Didn't end with a guilt trip every night like, and go to bed thinking about all that!

Teresa: Yeah, not that. That didn't happen.

Travis: Okay. Great!

Teresa: Okay, so here is a very brief history of summer camps in the United States. Historians trace the first American summer camp to an outdoor outing in 1861. It was led by an abolitionist named Frederick W Gunn, and he took about 30 boys and about a dozen girls on a 30 mile trek from their boarding school to—

Travis: 30 miles?!

Teresa: I know. They were really roughing it. Camping out in the woods.

Travis: 30 miles?!

Teresa: I know. From Welch's Point in Milford, Connecticut—

Travis: Is that where Welch's Grape Juice is? Because Grapes... Concord... Connecticut... I don't know.

Teresa: I don't know.

Travis: It feels real.

Teresa: Okay, so Gunn was an educator. It was his boarding school, right? So he knew these students already, and the parents also knew him. And an outdoorsman, right? So—

Travis: I should hope so!

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: I should hope that when he's like, "Yeah, I'm taking 50 something kids or whatever on this trek," that he wasn't like, "And I guess I'll figure it out on the way."

Teresa: So a lot of the things that they were doing while they were hiking were part of their regular curriculum, okay?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So like it wasn't that he was just throwing them out into the woods and said, "Here, just go."

Travis: Yeah, "Make your way ba—you—I've parachuted you out of a helicopter and you gotta find your way back."

Teresa: Right. No, he had been teaching them the skills that they would need before they started out on this trek, so it was part of their curriculum at the boarding school. His idea was that this trek would blend teamwork, self-reliance, and the lessons that they had learned on the natural sciences and recreational activities, and things like that, right? So it was—it was kind of like school outside, right?

Travis: You know, I think about this now, like when I went to those things and, you know, I did Boy Scouts for a little bit, Cub Scouts for a little bit, Awanas for a lot of bit, thanks, Southern Baptist teachings, but a lot of focus on that like building fires and like canoeing and archery. That doesn't come up so much in my everyday life now as you might think. And I think that makes a lot more sense when it's like 1860.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And it's like, we're going to learn about this stuff. I wish that I'd gone to camp and they had taught me like how to rewire something. Or taught me—

Teresa: That would have been fun.

Travis: Yeah! Taught me like how to negotiate the price of something, here's how to pay bills.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That would have been great!

Teresa: Well, I look back on a lot of my time in Girl Scout camp, and I feel like at the time I was thinking, this isn't camping, we have a little lodge that has a kitchen inside, and we have like permanent concrete like structures that there's already bunks and stuff in. But now that I'm thinking about it, I probably didn't need to learn how to prepare a campsite—

Travis: No!

Teresa: For my life—

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: But I did need to know like how to do a baked potato on the grill—

Travis: Sure!

Teresa: Right? That's fine. Making foil pack dinners outside on the campfire, or on the grill. Very similar.

Travis: Have—

Teresa: I did learn how to do that kind of stuff.

Travis: Have we talked about how our kids will often like say, "Oh, we want to go camping." And like we both know that they simply do not. And like, there is no amount of logic that you can apply to a child where you're like, guys, I know you.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: And I know camping. And I know that what's going to happen is, Mommy and I are going to lug all of the stuff and set everything up, and maybe five minutes later you're going to be like, "This is it?"

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "Can we go? [chuckles] Can we go home?"

Teresa: I remember doing like real outdoor camping one time, the kind where you have to dig a hole to go to the bathroom, where you have to prepare like an actual campsite to put like the tarp down and put the tent up and like do all that kind of stuff. And it was not fun.

Travis: I went camping often, it was not... we didn't have to dig a hole to poop in.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: We had—it was like at a campsite at Lake Vesuvius, in Ohio, I believe. And so they had like, you know, kind of like—

Teresa: Latrines?

Travis: Campsite, you know, baths. But other than that, what you've just described is what we would do. And I think I liked it okay.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: But there was always that like, and what do we do now? And what's the next thing?

Teresa: Right. So in 1861, it was probably sort of normal for these kids to like build outdoor fires and prepare campsites. But nowadays, you don't really need to do that in everyday life. But anyway, they also carried boats with them, so they could traverse rivers, they went fishing, and they did military drills, which I think was probably part of their like boarding school stuff as well.

Travis: Also, once again—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Especially 1861, some things on the horizon.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: And it was taught by an abolitionist, some things on the horizon.

Teresa: Yes, the Civil War.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Specifically. And so, Gunn thought that it was important that they know how to take care of themselves outside. He held similar trips in 1863 and 1865, and the students just loved it. The students loved it. They told their parents that they loved it. It was great. And he began in 1867 to expand the idea where he hosted and organized summer gatherings on Lake, I'm going to mispronounce this, Wurrumung?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Which was a few miles from the boarding school, right? So they would like not do the whole 30 mile trek, they would walk out and carry their gear a few miles. They continued until 1879, because Gunn would pass away in 1881. But an alum restarted it in 1893.

Travis: Short for aluminum.

Teresa: No.

Travis: No?

Teresa: No?

Travis: No.

Teresa: Singular for alumni.

Travis: Ah, that makes a lot more sense.

Teresa: Yeah. And the student would go on to found his own camps, Camp Keewaden. Again—

Travis: What Keewaden for? Was their slogan.

Teresa: [laughs] Which is now, I'm sure that maybe even some of our listeners have been, because it is the oldest continually operating summer camp in North America.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: You know, as it turns out, the children, they long for the woods.

Travis: They think they do.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: No, I think that they are probably—this is the thing. This is a mistake that I think it's easy as parents to fall into, which is to take your small sample size of children, and apply it to every child.

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Right? Our children like the out of doors.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: When the option of coming back indoors is available.

Teresa: Yes. They attended summer camp this year and they really talked a lot about going into the woods and gathering sticks and making forts and stuff like that—

Travis: And we've gone on hikes with them. They like going to creeks. All of that is great. Day trips—

Teresa: But they want to come home.

Travis: Day trips! Great.

Teresa: Right, they don't want to live out there in the woods.

Travis: No, they do not.

Teresa: Lauren McMillan, who is the public relations and communications manager for the American Camp Association, said that Gunn's youth excursions were more than just hanging out, right? Like we talked about, it was an intentional combination of outdoor living, recreation, education, character development, which is a big thing for this time in American history.

Travis: Yeah. I think that's where it gets a little sketchy for me.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Right? Because maybe my character is developing in a much more sedentary way. Maybe—

Teresa: In a much more indoor way.

Travis: Yeah! Maybe I'm more of an indoor comedy kid.

Teresa: Uh-huh.

Travis: And less of a I feel comfortable skinning something kid.

Teresa: Well, so here's the reason, right? The industrial revolution, right? So, there was a culture of nervousness around the idea that children were becoming "soft," because they were moving to cities and being "denied" the physically demanding farm chores that they would have had if they had a rural upbringing.

Travis: And little did they know, I love being soft.

Teresa: I know. [chuckles]

Travis: Being soft rules! You know what I mean?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I don't want to be hardened in any—I like being soft. I like being lazy. [chuckles] I like being denied the hardships of rural living. I'm fine with it, actually.

Teresa: Professor at Icahtha College, Michael Smith, told the History Channel that many Americans "hoped the character building forces of nature would revitalize bodies and spirits sagging under the weight of urban life and its conveniences."

Travis: Yeah, having conveniences is the worst.

Teresa: Oh, no. [chuckles]

Travis: Is the wo—ah!

Teresa: And guess—

Travis: Having food and water readily available to you when you need it—

Teresa: Guess who they thought—

Travis: The worst.

Teresa: That those conveniences were the worst for?

Travis: Rich kids?

Teresa: Boys.

Travis: Oh, yeah. That tracks. Yeah. Well, it just gives them too much time to feel feelings!

Teresa: Is that it?

Travis: And learn emotional intelligence.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: And spend time learning to be like available for their friends and loved ones and children and stuff.

Teresa: And we're being facetious, right? But like—

Travis: I'm being Travis.

Teresa: Okay. [chuckles] You always are.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: But the culture was not.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Like this was the real deal, this is what people actually thought was necessary for "building character" and making these strapping young men contributors to society.

Travis: And let us not lose sight of the fact that I don't know that that's ever fully gone away. It's definitely decreased in like public overall feeling. But man, you can still find those things of like, "Do you want to be an alpha? Come to this boot camp training thing and I'll make you crawl through the mud and break you down and build you back up!" And it's like, hey, what about therapy?

Teresa: So—

Travis: Have you guys thought about therapy?

Teresa: I also want to say, for our listeners, we are not saying that people should not go outside.

Travis: No, but it should be by choice.

Teresa: It should be by choice. And there are benefits of like outdoor recreation that are more like mental, right? But that's not what they're talking about. They're talking about toughening people up in a like rugged kind of way. They're not talking about like the quiet contemplation of like spending an evening listening to crickets and birds—

Travis: Meditating.

Teresa: Right? That's not what they're talking about.

Travis: I also have a chip on my shoulder about it, because throughout history, as long as I, you know, can think of, the idea of like, hey, rather than confront your feelings about this, man, generic man, why not go hunting instead?

Teresa: Yeah, fill it with activity.

Travis: Just go—just go fishing and don't talk about anything, right? Rather than feel your feelings, distract yourself with this stuff.

Teresa: Right. Right. So it turns out—

Travis: That it's time to take a break for a word from another Max Fun show!

Teresa: Sneaky.

Travis: Yeah.

[theme music plays]

J.Keith: Say, what's the trivia show where dreams come true?

Helen: It's got to be Go Fact Yourself!

[applause]

J.Keith [live]: Legend in the house!

J.Keith: We quiz celebrity contestants about topics they love!

Helen: Then bring out surprise experts!

J.Keith: To delight and amaze.

J.Keith [live]: And then finally, tell us why you know and love the lyrics to the song "Knockin' Boots" by Candyman.

Helen [live]: Joining us tonight is a rapper and producer, it's Candyman!

[applause]

Guest 1: Oh, Candyman!

Guest 2: This is among the greatest moments of my life.

[audience laughs and cheers]

Guest 3: This is one of mine too. I love it.

Helen: That's Go Fact Yourself!

J.Keith: Twice a month, every month.

Helen: Here on Maximum Fun!

[break]

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[break]

Travis: Okay, we're back now.

Teresa: It turns out that outdoor time—

Travis: I don't know why I sounded so panicked when I s—we're back! Okay!

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: We're back now. *Hua!* Where did we go?!

Teresa: Outdoor Time is good for girls too.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Most—

Travis: And non-binary people.

Teresa: And non-binary people.

Travis: And just ev—it's—maybe going outdoors—

Teresa: Everyone.

Travis: For as long as you want to. [chuckles] I do, from time to—I like gardening? I like gardening.

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: Because then I know I get to go back inside when I'm done.

Teresa: That's true. The Young Women's Christian Association, WYCA, was the first organization to provide—

Travis: YWCA. It took me s—

Teresa: W—oh, no, you're right. Yes.

Travis: It took me so long—

Teresa: YWCA.

Travis: To parse those letters in my head that I was like, that doesn't sound right, but I don't know why.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: *Huuh!* Anyways—

Teresa: I juxtaposed—

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: The two. Yeah.

Travis: And my brain could not—and but like, yeah. I don't even know what's happening.

Teresa: Anyway.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: They called them vacation programs, which I think is a way of kind of like softening it—

Travis: They did that in Southern Bronx too with Vacation Bible School.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: To make it sound like, *whoow!* But it was like, hey, you know how you normally have to go to church only like once or twice maybe a week?

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Sometimes three times if your mom is the church secretary.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: I'd say you go Sunday evenings too. Well, guess what? For this week, you get to go every day! What a vacation!

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. So this was like a summer boarding house, where the women were encouraged to rest in their recreation, right? So it was "for tired young women wearing out their lives in an almost endless drudgery, for

wages that admit no thought or rest or recreation." That sounds great. Let's go do that.

Travis: Yeah. It's a shame that at the time they had to be very careful with their language and they couldn't just say like, "Do you guys want to get away from men for a while?"

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: How about men and factories?

Travis: Yeah, you want to get away from the factories run by men?

Teresa: Yeah! [chuckles] The first YWCA—

Travis: Nailed it.

Teresa: Did it right that time, women's camp, was in Ashbury Park in New Jersey, and was appropriately named Sea Rest.

Travis: How nice.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: That's not the bo—what did you go on? You went on sea something, when you went on a ship for like the explorers.

Teresa: Oh... Sea Base.

Travis: Sea Base.

Teresa: Yeah. So—

Travis: For a second I was like, did you go to this camp? But now I real—okay.

Teresa: Throughout the turn of the century, we started to get more and more camps. We've got Camp Array in New York, in 1892, which eventually in 1902 would be a girls only camp.

Travis: Mm-hm. Camp Anawanna in 1996, on Salute Your Shorts on Nickelodeon.

Teresa: Uh-huh. Aloha Camps in 1905, Alfred Lake Camp in 1907. So, what we—

Travis: Camp Crystal Lake.

Teresa: What? What's that from?

Travis: Friday the 13th.

Teresa: *Neh!* So what we started to see is all of these camps are popping up, and what we really need is a governing body, for some standards.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right? Because although I'm sure everyone had good intentions, we need to make sure—

Travis: That's lovely of you—that's lovely of you to assume that, baby. It's one of the reasons I think you're great. Is that your assumption of like, everybody had good intentions, it just might not have worked out well. And there was nobody who was like, "Okay, quick buck. Awesome. Yeah, this is my camp... Whatever. Camp Whatever. Come on down."

Teresa: So we needed a governing body to make sure that there were some standards set. And so, in 1910, we got the Camp Directors Association of America, which would later be called the American Camp Association. So, they started making it so that if you—I mean, you didn't have to be accredited at this point, right? But if you wanted to be considered among like the upper echelons of camps, you got accreditation from these people.

Travis: Yeah. And if you don't get accredited and people are looking for a camp to go to, which one would you rather go to? The one that's been approved by a board like of people whose job it is to approve camps that are good to go to.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Or the people who are like, "We actually don't want to go through that process."

Teresa: Yeah. And by 1925, there were 125 specifically girls camps established in the United States. So, we needed an association in order to keep everything above board, right? They all were kind of like outdoorsy, right? But it was still catering primarily to the middle class and upper classes, right?

Travis: Well, that makes se—I mean, because, especially at the time, right? Of like, who has disposable income.

Teresa: And leisure time.

Travis: And that we can promote this idea of your kids don't have to work hard anymore because you've reached this level of comfort, right? Where that's kind of a hard sell to people who are experiencing poverty.

Teresa: Right. But because we had so many camps now, they were starting to be opened up to more and more people from varied backgrounds. So, it really was starting at this point in 1925 to be a real escape for people who needed to have some like fresh air in their lives.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: So if you—if you were a young person working in the city, there were finally enough places for you to go in order to escape that and have some outdoor time, that wasn't filled with like smoke and cow poop. And I mean, horse poop, probably.

Travis: Any kind of poop. There was poop everywhere.

Teresa: And this is also where we start getting like specific camps for specific groups, like religious institutions.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And ethnic organizations, and—

Travis: Sports I assume too.

Teresa: Girl scouts and... yeah, absolutely. Right? And the reason why people started doing that is because they wanted kids to continue to experience this in the groups that they already knew. Right? So like if you have a Girl Scout troop, you can increase the bonding of the troop by all going out to camp together.

Travis: Sure. I will say that that was one of the things that I did like about it, is like the other like kids in my age group at church, we'd go there together. So there was an immediate like, we know each other. Right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: I will say the other side of it, though, is when it is an organization, whether intentional or not, it also gives a chance for, and I can't think of a better word than this, and I'm sorry if this offends anyone, indoctrination, right?

Teresa: Sure, yeah.

Travis: Of like now you're kind of in this intensive, of this thing. Like I said, whether intentional or not, right? It is that thing of like, now you feel very connected to this thing, right?

Teresa: That's true.

Travis: Because of these experiences.

Teresa: That is true. It continued to grow, particularly after World War II. Right?

Travis: Well, you had a baby boom. Of course it grew. You gotta have something to do with all those babies you boomed.

Teresa: That's right. And so the American Camp Association also grew. This is when we really start to see published things about their minimum health, safety and programming standards. In 1954, it became a requirement for camps to provide evidence that they complied with the ACA camp standards before they opened their gates to campers.

Travis: Good.

Teresa: Here's an interesting thing. Alexx downloaded their standards at a glance from their website, which is like, you know, the kind of summary. And it's 12 pages long.

Travis: At a glance?

Teresa: At a glance!

Travis: That's not a glance, that's a stare!

Teresa: Right. I know.

Travis: At a stare!

Teresa: *Oohw!*

Travis: At a read.

Teresa: You wonder how long the other documents are—

Travis: Yeah, man!

Teresa: If this is—if this is the condensed version.

Travis: You've just convinced me to never start a summer camp—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And get it accredited.

Teresa: Well, actually, this convinced me that the fact that our girl's summer camp this year was accredited is pretty like strenuous.

Travis: Can't stress enough, day camp. [chuckles]

Teresa: Yes, day camp.

Travis: Once again, I don't want to get those, "Hello, mother, hello, father" kind of letters. Like—

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Guys... "It's been 12 hours, but I need you to come get me right now."

Teresa: Some—

Travis: "They don't have my stuff here. My 8000 stuffies that I sleep with and there's a small sliver of room in the bed for me? They don't have any of that here. Come get me now! What have you done?"

Teresa: Some examples of things included in this are a specific written statement about respecting the rights and dignity of everyone in the camp, including staff, campers, volunteers, and parents, the ability to accommodate special health needs of campers, whether it's an allergy, a physical disability, or mental health accommodations, background checks and yearly screenings for staff members, programs and activities that offer measurable goals with the ability for the campers to track their progress as they meet new challenges, and safety rails on all bunk beds.

Travis: And no supernatural serial killers that come back each year for the sequel. Friday the 13th.

Teresa: Friday the 13th, yes. I mean, I imagine that's in there. Maybe not—

Travis: You think?!

Teresa: At the glance.

Travis: Maybe yeah, maybe not—

Teresa: But maybe in the full—

Travis: Maybe not in those exact words!

Teresa: Right.

Travis: But there's definitely... this is the tru—if I was sending my kids to sleep away camp, I would be like, and just—ha-ha-ha! There's no—there's—I'm being silly, of course, supernatural killers or something? You'd tell me, right? You'd have to disclose that?

Teresa: Currently, there are 260 standards for health, safety and programming that have to be met if you want a properly accredited summer camp in the United States. And in 1956, they broadened their standards for day camp rules as well as overnight ones.

Travis: Okay!

Teresa: Now there are more than 20,000 year-round and summer camp programs operating in the United States under full accreditation of the ACA. So that serves around 26 million campers each year.

Travis: So like number one piece of advice, look for that accreditation.

Teresa: I would, yes.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Here's the thing. Earlier, we talked a lot about how it was kind of the culture at the beginning of the camp movement that it was for the boys' own good kind of thing, to keep them rugged. But there is science that says that—

Travis: Sci—wait, hold on, there's science?

Teresa: Science.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That says camping is really great for youths.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: According to the Journal of Youth Development, 60% of summer camp attendees felt more confident after attending a summer program.

Travis: Now listen, okay! But that means 40% didn't. Right? So what you're saying is, there is proof that three fifths of the population, it is beneficial.

Teresa: Maybe they didn't feel more, but I don't know of any studies that said they felt less? Maybe it was just the same. Just felt even.

Travis: Okay. I—listen, as an indoor kid defending other indoor kids, I'm just saying that if your kid is like, "I do not want to go—"

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: And you're like, "But it will be good for you!"

Teresa: I think that you—

Travis: Don't!

Teresa: Are correct. You should not force your children.

Travis: Yeah, don't let your kids go outside.

Teresa: [chuckles] No.

Travis: Lock...

Teresa: *Aah...*

Travis: Don't—

Teresa: Don't say that.

Travis: Don't let them go outside at all.

Teresa: The University of Utah found that kid campers not only learned how to manage stress and anxiety, but were also more likely to face challenges head on in other parts of their lives. So, dozens of other studies have corroborated that campers learn effective coping mechanisms, higher levels of confidence, and greater development of essential social skills like empathy and communication.

Travis: And how to check each other for ticks.

Teresa: Certainly.

Travis: Nice.

Teresa: Friendship bracelets.

Travis: Ticks.

Teresa: [chuckles] Yes, but—

Travis: You check each other for ticks.

Teresa: Yes, but also how to put a worm on a hook for fishing.

Travis: Sure. Once again, that doesn't come up in my everyday life though, surprisingly. Murdering worms? Worm murder is I—in fact, with two children, I find myself rescuing worms more than murdering them. When I move something and—outside and the kids are like, "Dad!" What I started to call wormmergency.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: And then became a wormmergency. I'd have to run over and pick up the worm and throw it into the grass.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Yeah! So, if anything, I've learned mercy. Towards worms.

Teresa: Sure! Sure. Things like making a fire are a lifelong skill that even if you are making it inside of a charcoal grill, you need to know, right?

Travis: Yes, I do like knowing how to make a fire. I think that is like the one thing that I am confident now—like not like I'm the best at it, but if, I don't know, I found myself in a pos—like there's a fire pit at a party or whatever—

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: Then I'm like... okay, I know what I'm doing.

Teresa: Solving a challenge like a ropes course is great for creating friendships.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And maybe even staying overnight away from home can prove to a child that they can do hard and scary things.

Travis: Yes, fair.

Teresa: So now the ACA continues to pave the way for all sorts of children to experience the outdoors in a safe environment, supported by adults who

are dedicated to seeing them thrive. All over the country, you can find specific camps for your kids, things like robot camp, right? Horseback riding—

Travis: For robots.

Teresa: Theater.

Travis: For horses.

Teresa: [chuckles] No, for your kids, to learn those things.

Travis: Oh, yes, okay.

Teresa: Or just kind of like general outdoorsy summer's camps.

Travis: I bet you can find an E-sports camp. That'd be great. They make them go outside 30 minutes a day.

Teresa: Mm-hm.

Travis: Just to get some sunlight, and then the rest of it is—

Teresa: Is E-sports.

Travis: E-sports!

Teresa: Okay. So if our...

Travis: I want to start an outdoor/indoor kids camp.

Teresa: Oh?

Travis: Where it's like you're gonna play E-sports, but we're like in a greenhouse, it's a solarium, so you're getting lots of sunlight.

Teresa: [laughs] That sounds really fun. You should do that. If you, Shmanners Fanners, are going to a summer camp, here are some etiquette

tips. Remember to respect other people's property, and keep your own belongings organized. And the best way to do that is to label them, right? There might be a lot of similar equipment. Label everything, so then there's no difficulty discerning whose is whose.

That way you can also keep track of your own property. Remember to stay with your group. Camp counselors and staff do a lot of logistical work to make sure that everyone gets where they're supposed to be, when they are supposed to be there. So, stay with your group for your head counts. That's important. In the same way, don't go anywhere that you don't have permission to do.

Whether you're out in the wilderness, right? You don't want to go too far away from camp, or if you're like a college campus, people might still be working. You don't want to go into buildings or rooms or classrooms that are not specifically for your camp. Make sure that you have both closed-toed shoes for safety and flip-flops for showers and pools, to keep your feet and body safe, right?

Travis: And if you hear whispering in the woods at night, don't go. Don't go there, don't.

Teresa: Remember all of your leave no trace camping training, and better yet, leave it better than you found it. So don't littler—

Travis: But you can trace leaves. If you want to trace a leave, you can.

Teresa: And then put it back on the ground.

Travis: Yeah, because leave no trace, but trace some leaves. That's what I always say.

Teresa: So always walk on the trails and be willing to clean up a mess if you find it, right? Here's a good rule that Alex found on a camping website. If you have broken the rules or you're involved in fighting, pretend fighting, teasing, put-downs, or gossip, you are part of the problem, even if you didn't start it.

Travis: So become part of the solution.

Teresa: *Yeah.* Don't cross paths with wildlife, even squirrels need their space, right? Don't be too cool to participate in the activities!

Travis: No.

Teresa: There's always going to be something that seems maybe a little hokey or whatever, but the important part is to play by the rules of the game, right?

Travis: And having fun is cool!

Teresa: Get into it!

Travis: You're not cool by not doing things, unless they're bad things. Don't do bad things, that's not cool. Do fun things that are good, that's cool. I'm an adult. I just sound like such a grown-up.

Teresa: [chuckles]

Travis: Hey, bad things aren't cool! You know what is cool?

Teresa: Good things!

Travis: Good, clean fun!

Teresa: You may learn some new skills. It would be fun to learn new schools. It might also be frustrating, so remember that everyone is learning at the same time, so like have a good attitude, right?

Travis: And I promise you, if nothing else, being able to tie things up, knots that stay there, that is a thing that you will use for the rest of your life.

Teresa: Yes. Yes indeed.

Travis: Please learn to do that. Hey, everybody, thank you so much for joining us. Thank you to our researcher, Alexx, without whom we could not

do the show. Thank you to our editors, Rachel and Gino, without whom we could not do the show. Thank you to you for listening. You're the kindling that we need to start this fire that we call Shmanners.

Teresa: Yes, beautiful.

Travis: Thank you. I also wanted to let everybody know, it's a new month, so there's new merch over in the merch store, including a new Shmanners logo pin, designed by Dana Wagner.

Teresa: It's beautiful!

Travis: It is beautiful. And a bunch of other great stuff over there. And 10% of all the merch proceeds from August are going to go to Native Women Lead. So go check that out at mcelroymerch.com! What else, Teresa?

Teresa: We always thank Brent 'brentalfloss' Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. We also thank Bruja Betty Pin-Up Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today. Also, we are always taking topic suggestions, questions, idioms, now we're doing slang. So please, if you have any of those ideas, send them to shmannerscast@gmail.com, and Alexx reads every single one.

Travis: And that's going to do it for us, so join us again next week.

Teresa: No RSVP required.

Travis: You've been listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: [cheers] Manners-shmanners! Get it? Like a cheer.

Travis: Oh, I get it! Yeah, yeah, yeah!

["Shmanners Theme" by brentalfloss plays]

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