

Summer Camp in February

What can be learned in conference “bunks”

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Last week, I attended and spoke at the American Camp Association’s annual national conference. Because the Association is celebrating 100 years of camping, [their site](#) contains some great historical information about the origins of summer camp. The camp industry itself is a fascinating one. It is a world steeped in tradition, but struggling with reinvention and adapting as necessary to meet the needs of today’s parents and kids. [Chip Heath](#) and [Joe Ehrmann](#) were among the inspiring keynotes, dealing with the process of making change and leaving a significant impact on the future.

At its core, camp is all about going to a different kind of environment, where one can meet and connect with new people, learn interesting and novel skills, explore, and hopefully have fun. Conferences can be very much the same.

Although we’re past the days of lanyard and color war, traveling into new “woods” at least once a year is a worthwhile activity. Getting out of town, breathing in fresh air, and meeting some “kids” who are different from us is as vital to innovation and growth in adults as it is to youth.

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