



Camp Rage gets kids out of their comfort zones.



Camp Rage boasts over 34 different activities for kids, including kayaking.

Camps keep the kids occupied this summer

Offerings range from sporting events to confidence building, appreciation of nature

BEIRUT: School holidays – kids love them, working parents do not. Now that school is over and the long summer months are underway, finding something to keep the kids safe, entertained and occupied will be on the forefront of most parents' minds.

Rather than relying on family, friends or day care, some parents opt to send their children to camp for that ultimate learning experience away from home.

The benefits of summer camps – aside from having professionals looking after your kids – are many: The children get to meet people from different walks of life, even different countries; they get to learn and keep their minds active during the break from school; and they can engage in

activities that they normally wouldn't have the chance to experience.

The Daily Star has put together a list of some of the options this summer for keeping the kids occupied.

Camp Rage

While the name might be slightly off-putting to native English speakers, Camp Rage – French for something you love passionately – has been held for the last four years at the Laklouk Village Vacances and is billed as the Middle East's first and only professional summer camp for kids.

The camp, the longest-running on the list, takes place from July 29 until Aug. 9 and welcomes campers between the ages of 7 and 18.

Over the past few years the camp has seen Lebanese visitors as well as foreigners from 12 different countries, all looking to spend the summer in Lebanon. A lot of the campers are Lebanese who live abroad and are sent to Camp Rage by their parents to help improve their Lebanese dialect and meet people of their own age so

they can start forming a network in the country, according to Camp Rage's Nour Saab.

Trusting the camp to pick their children up at the airport and look after them for two weeks might seem hard for some parents, but the campers at Camp Rage are well looked after with a ratio of one camp monitor for every two kids.

The camp is full board, with the campers housed in a hotel in the resort, and many of the 34 different kinds of activities available, including horse riding, scuba diving in the pool and tennis courts, are housed on-site.

Each day the campers will take part in five activities, with sporting events usually held during the day and social events – karaoke, pool parties or BBQs round the bonfire – held at night.

In keeping with the spirit of introducing Lebanon to its campers, day trips are arranged to let the kids see different parts of the country, including a visit to Byblos on the beach trip and heading down south to camp.

Definitely the camp for adventurous kids, Camp Rage also offers activities that include jet skiing, water polo, spelunking, mountain biking, archery and rock climbing.

For more info see: <http://www.campirage.com/>.

Y.E.S.! Camp

Geared toward kids aged 8-16, Y.E.S.! Camp is an educational summer camp hosted by TEAM IN MOTION at the Arz Ehmej Reserve from July 22-25.

Divided into two age groups, 8-12 and 12-16, the campers will spend four days taking part in games and activities designed to encourage them to step out of their comfort zones and network with other young people.

The goals of the camp are to get kids to have fun while working on leadership, communication and listening skills. There will also be a focus on ecotourism, with campers taking part in a hike through the Arz Ehmej reserve to see rare trees, learning how to milk cows and make cheese. Each child will plant his or her own tree in the reserve.

And as a bonus for parents concerned with their children's addiction to technology, Y.E.S.! Camp has banned all electronics, so no iPads, iPods or mobile phones will be allowed at the camp.

In addition, the meals, which are provided in the package, are all homemade using healthy produce.

For more info contact: info@tim-lb.com.

Y.E.S.!+ Camp

Later this summer a self-esteem-



Kids can cool off in the summer sun with the watersports on offer at M13 Summer Camp 2015.



Children learn how to shoot straight during archery lessons at M13.



Acrylic and oil painting are some of the skills taught at The Artwork Shop.

building camp will be held for older kids aged 13-17 by the same group behind the Y.E.S.! Camp.

Y.E.S.!+ will be held at Kfar Deb-dian Aug. 18-21, with the objective of empowering and building the self-confidence of the teens taking part.

There will be team-building games, drama therapy workshops, art therapy and role playing to teach communication skills in different scenarios with friends, parents and people in positions of authority.

The campers will also visit women in the region to learn how to prepare mouneh, and will dive into ecotourism via hikes in Faqra, Kfar Deb-dian and Wadi al-Salib.

For more info contact: info@tim-lb.com.

M13 Summer Camp 2015

Parents who prefer a daytime summer camp for their kids rather than one that keeps them on-site for several days have the option of M13 Summer Camp 2015, held at the M13 Courts and Sports Club in Antelias.

Designed for kids aged 5-13, the camp is running from June 29 until Aug. 28 every Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The camp is fully customizable, with parents getting to set their kids' schedule of activities and signing them up for day or week passes, whatever suits their schedules.

This summer camp offers a mix of entertainment, fitness, personality building and water activities, and features initiation classes for the Elie Mchantaf Basketball and Soccer Academy.

There will also be surprise guests and prize giveaways during the camp.

Activities include darts, chess, water polo, swimming, break dancing, martial arts and trampolines, as well as mini football and mini basketball by the Elie Mchantaf Basketball and Soccer Academy.

For more info contact: info@eliemchantafgroup.com.

Children Summer Camp with The Artwork Shop

Another option for parents looking for some daytime entertainment is the Children Summer Camp hosted by The Artwork Shop in Hamra every Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., from July 10 until Sept. 30.

There are seven different courses to choose from at different times on different days, with the Walk-In course running from Monday through Friday.

The Gardening course, for example, will teach campers the art of Ikebana (flower arranging) and how to make compost, plant apple and mango seed. Painting & Drawing is for those who want to learn acrylic and oil painting, sketching and designs in ink.

Cake Decoration involves decorating cupcakes with coloring fondant

techniques. Fashion & Jewelry Design teaches kids how to draw models as well as apparel for different events and make brooches from material and embroidery.

Mosaic teaches campers about working with mosaic stones on different surfaces while Pottery teaches

them how to craft bowls, animals and sculptures by hand.

Finally Walk-In is a hodgepodge of creative mornings and afternoons which includes painting, drawing and handicrafts.

For more info call: 01-749-646.

Pulse 5K helps school kids with cancer

By Nazih Osseiran
The Daily Star

BEIRUT: Preparations are underway for the sixth annual "Pulse 5K" charity run to raise funds for Myschoolpulse, a Lebanese NGO dedicated to providing education for child cancer patients.

The event, to be held at the Faqra Country Club on Aug. 2, is a family affair. Three events are slated to take place – a 5-kilometer run, a 5-kilometer walk, and a "1K Run with Mom" for kids and their mothers.

Kids can also spend the day in a special play area and a buffet lunch will be served after the winners of the races are announced. Participants must pay \$25 to register.

The annual event is the NGO's main funding vehicle. The organization relies on donations from the event to run its operations and cater to the needs of child cancer patients undergoing long periods of treatment in hospital.

"Unlike adults, 75-80 percent of children are cured of cancer, but parents often are not aware of this and expect their children to die, so their education is not given priority and is often the last thing on their mind," said Carol Ghazal, Myschoolpulse's community and operational supervisor.

Drawing from a network of 14 professional educators, the NGO has been able to provide an education for 300 patients since its inception.

It employs teachers in six hospitals across Lebanon where education is provided free of charge.

Typically, children suffering from chronic diseases and cancer miss out on their education due to extended stays in hospital. Such gaps affect a child's ability to reintegrate back into school once treatment is complete.

Often parents think the school environment may not be safe for their sick child and worry it may cause them to be tired under the burden of schoolwork. But Myschoolpulse believes that education sends the child an encouraging message of the potential for recovery and a future. Education sessions vary accord-

ing to the health of the patients, some of whom require individual attention. Teachers may don a surgical gown and sit next to the patient's bed to provide the day's lesson. Art therapy is also provided for certain patients.

For some children Myschoolpulse is their first exposure to any form of schooling. Once cured, these children go on to pursue school in a more formal atmosphere.

The NGO was created in memory of founder Mirelle Nassif's son, Paul, who lost his life to cancer in the summer of 2009. While undergoing treatment in London, Paul requested that he continue his studies. He was able to do so and received excellent grades.

When Nassif returned to Lebanon, she found the option to pursue an education was not available to children undergoing prolonged treatment in hospitals. Working with her husband Philippe Yared and cousin Daniele Diab, she founded Myschoolpulse.

"Mirelle was never fond of hosting galas and dinners to raise funds," said Carol when asked about the NGO's funding strategy. "She's a sports-oriented person and was a ski champion at some point. Because of that, all our events revolve around sports and are geared toward fun."

The event will be conducted in partnership with the Beirut Marathon Association, which will provide a number of volunteers to help participants during the event.

Bank Audi, Aishti and Bjorg are sponsoring the event.

Race winners will receive a gift bag courtesy of Aishti.

Individuals interested in participating may register at the Myschoolpulse booth in ABC Ashrafieh or via the NGO's website.

The deadline for registration is 10 p.m. on July 16.

Participants may top up their registration payment with a direct donation to the NGO. In addition to Pulse 5K, Myschoolpulse holds two other fundraisers throughout the year: the "Swim-a-thon" and "Dine for Myschoolpulse."

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