

# Q&A

with **Goldie Gendler Silverman**

author of *Camping with Kids: The Complete Guide to Car, Tent, and RV Camping*



**Why did you write this book?**  
I had written a successful book called *Backpacking with Babies and Small Children* but people told me that while they would like to try camping, they didn't want to have to leave the car behind. So I wrote *Camping with Kids*, which

spans the range from local tent camping to car and RV camping trips.

**What kind of trip do you suggest for a family to get started?**

Pick a campground that does not require a long or difficult drive to get to, and go at a time of year when the temperatures will be comfortable. Keep the trip activities simple—a short walk in the woods, a familiar game near the tent.

**Your book says you relied on more than 120 experts for contributions. How did you find them?**

A local middle school invited me to visit and the students then wrote essays about their camping experience. Friends allowed me to interview their children and grandchildren. I visited RV shows and outdoor stores. My husband and I drove up to campgrounds not far from Seattle on weekends and walked around talking to people with kids and taking pictures.

**You mentioned cooking. What do kids like best to eat when they're camping?**

The one favorite food that most of the kids mentioned was s'mores. The book includes several different instructions for ways to make those gooey sandwiches, but I think that what really appeals to the kids is that they make them themselves. Most of the foods kids like a lot are the things they had a hand in preparing—foil wrapped foods, for example. The book is stuffed full of ideas for camp meals.



**What new camp cooking ideas did you pick up?**

One was a campfire pie iron, a gadget with a long handle that toasts a sandwich over the fire. Another suggestion is a Ziploc omelet. You break an egg into a plastic baggie, seal it, squish the egg with your hands, and drop the bag into a pot of boiling water.

When the egg looks done, you open the baggie, add condiments like onions or cheese or chopped tomato, and eat it right from the bag.

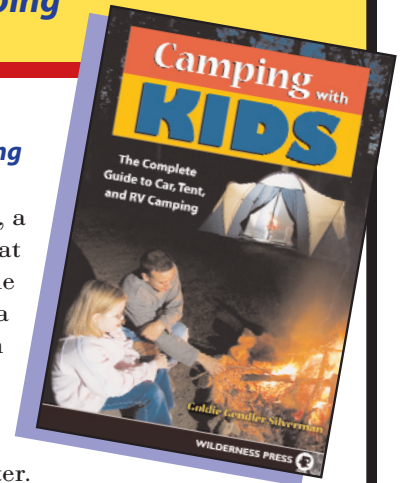
**What would be the three most important things not to forget when you set off for a camping trip?**

More than any material thing, you need to have the right attitude—a combination of good humor, patience, and flexibility. As for gear, be sure that your shelter, whether it's a tent or a trailer or an RV, is in good condition and complete—no missing tent poles or torn window netting. Then be sure that you have some warm clothing for everyone; you should be prepared for sudden weather changes.

**If you were to give one piece of advice to parents who want to have a successful camping experience with their kids, what would it be?**

I would tell them to pay attention to their kids, to involve them in all the planning, be sensitive to their comfort in the car and at the campground, and feed them well!

Seattle resident Goldie Silverman learned to camp in Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, and Arizona. Mother of three grown children and two grandchildren, Goldie now hikes all over the world, but still backpacks and camps with her family near her home.



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