

A Snapshot of our days of Summer 2017

This summer was filled with many joys, victories, field trips, struggles, splashes and laughter. So much happens in such a short amount of time, that it is hard to fully describe! Here is our best attempt at giving you a snap shot of all the fun we had this summer. So lets start at the beginning. There are so many things to learn, tackle, work through, etc.. It's not just the mechanisms of the day nor the limits ensuring safety and fun; but, it also encompasses all the relational quandaries. We grow and journey together as a family and with that comes all the interesting dynamics of who we are individually and how we are wired. There are challenges with what mystery food dad or mom has packed in the lunch box, whose underwear is glowing on the pool deck, why the bus driver isn't here right now, why this person has three DLC shirts and the two friends missing the shirts aren't the least bit concerned by the fact that they no longer have one for the trip home, etc. You name it, we work through it. When the first two weeks are over, things start to settle down somewhat and we all get used to the expectations that are helping us grow in personal responsibility and respect for our peers and the world around us. There are so many challenges we all get to work through! How in the world did all that stuff fit in the backpack in the first place? Why can't I have what I want for free? However, after the second week, we actually do begin to see progress and it is celebrated by all. (Sometimes mom and dad are in on the learning curve too!)

This summer presented itself with an unusually strong flavor of "why?" to almost any direction given. We chuckle about it now but in the thick of it, you think you might just pop a belly button! We do let our friends know that it is okay to ask why but first cooperate with our words then we'll discuss it. Many times this plays out in safety issues and it is vitally important that our friends learn to listen and to cooperate the first time asked. Follow-up discussions are always a great opportunity to educate the entire group as we gather feedback or ideas from other friends. We also may role play the scenario multiple times giving your child the opportunity to act out not only acceptable and successful ways of dealing with a situation but also the inappropriate (and often QUITE goofy) ways as well. Through laughter and fun we are able to help your child learn (and "own") new and different ways of solving the issue while avoiding unhealthy shame and guilt.

Another key learning component at the beginning of our summer together was respectful listening and appropriate ways to be heard. Somebody must have told our friends that Teacher Stephanie and Bonnie had multiple automatic interruption push buttons around their midsections... and, if at first the button doesn't succeed, press and press, and press again. Working through appropriate ways of getting our attention and having a turn to speak required a great amount of discussion, role playing, and reminding. It wasn't just for the teachers' sake, it was also for the respect of our peers. Having to wait for a turn to speak does require much self-control. We did let our

friends know, however, that if ever there were an emergency, by all means, touch our arm and communicate that there is an emergency. Hopefully, you noticed this growth in your child at home; we sure did!

We were so honored by our American hero, 92 year old Navy Veteran visit, Dave Callahan. Years ago, Teacher Bonnie heard Dave on the radio giving an interview of being a survivor on the attack at Pearl Harbor and was amazed and impressed by his courage and story. A few months ago, she found his address and wrote him a letter asking if he would be willing to come to our school to speak with the school agers around the 4th of July. The letter had DLC's phone number in it, encouraging him to call. Surprisingly, Dave called us! We were all quite shocked and excited to have him join us. He told us, "I can come any day except Saturday" and gave us a good chuckle from the start. Dave was a delight to have in our school. He spoke of bravery, courage, sadness and regaining strength. The school agers brainstormed questions for Dave, and were able to ask those and many others. We were so grateful that he came to speak to us all-but Dave made it very clear- he was grateful for us! He so thoroughly enjoyed getting to meet your children and enjoy the morning with them. We created a special banner for him, red white and blue canvases, and a special card as a thank you for his time.

A First for all Things

Sierra "It was my first time going upside down at Discovery Kingdom. Well, actually anywhere! I was really super nervous at first but it was special to have my Aunt Tara there...the one from New York. So I did want to do it. Before I got on, I was happy and a tiny bit scared. I was seeing other people on the roller coaster. Some of them did look super scared and some did scream with their eyes shut but there also some people who looked like they were having fun.I just got on. Even Ethan Hengl just got on. It made you go forward and backward very fast then faster! Then the speed limit was even faster and I just knew it was a superfast roller coaster! People say it's scary but I actually thought it was fun. I did really like it. It bumps you up to a high point then that's when you do the loop-de-loop then there's the other whole side. I am going on it again next year!"

Lexi "I went in line at Discovery Kingdom with my dad, and grandpa, and Summer. I was thinking I might fall off. And then when I got on top I was definitely screaming. But, it was fun because I do like the going high thing and when it did...oh wow! That's when it did the loop-de-loop. I was like thinking it really didn't feel like anything. It felt just like nothing! On the scariest part I was kinda whispering to myself, "Holy smokes! That was fun!" Oh yes, I will definitely try it again."

Brendan "I really liked Monkey Madness and nobody was in line for it. It's new at Discovery Kingdom. It was really fun. There's this gorilla guy who fell into the front of

the roller coaster and he rides with you. You get splashed by hippos; really! You get wet! Then this airplane monkey gets you and flies you through places...kinda like a crazy, not real airplane ride. I was never scared. It was just fun. All fun! It feels like you are on a ride because the chairs are big and they are tipping everywhere but its really like a huge TV tricking you. Everyone should try it."

Autumn "I went with Maya, Sierra, and Ethan Hengl on Sky Screamer at Discovery Kingdom. I have never done it before because you go up on swings way up higher than all Discovery Kingdom then you go round and round. It went really fast and you felt like your legs were floating in the air and it felt like my shoes had fallen off! But they didn't. I was up there thinking I felt really good on this ride and I liked it. I wasn't scared but I was having fun on it."

Kyla "My mom said I could go with my friends to the Jelly Belly Factory with DLC. I had fun! My favorite part was trading the money for free stuff. It was fun stuff too! It made me feel like a real kind of grown up. I felt all weird like happy and when I got the stuff I was super happy. I know I had a happy face because I could feel it. I got Bean Boozle!"

Jackson "I liked having my dad at Berkeley Adventure Playground. It is by the water. My dad helped me build a real fighting sword that is so strong! We got wood and nails but I had to find bended up nails to get the hammer. The hammer made good building so easy. I didn't use the magnet to find the nails; I just looked with my eyes and grabbed 'em with my hands."

Maya "We were gonna go on Sky Screamer but my mom said Superman was on the way to Sky Screamer. We did it like three times! I had never been on it before. I sat next to my mom. My usually screams but not this time. It does turn upside down and gets dark. It was a super fast ride. I really liked it!"

Briony "It was so weird at Discovery Kingdom because it was like we were the only ones there. I mean, just our group! I didn't even see the other kids from DLC just our girl group. We were called the Crystals. We went on Monkey Madness... no line! Then we went to Tava's Jungle and we just went on everything as many times as we wanted which really was a lot of times on a lot of things."

Beckham "I had a super bunch of fun seeing the real live Pikachu when we was hunting for the geocaches. I did like the army area at Cottage Pool too! It's like a big forest! Everyone was running and laughing and then Jackson said there was a snake. Teacher Bonnie was laughing so hard but not the kids! We were screaming and running to get away. I went down by the creek with Sam and Nico and that's when we saw that alligator swimming in the creek. I was like, "Aaaaaaaa..!" and Teacher Bonnie and the big girls were just laughing. I went pee in my shorts! Nico said to go tell Bonnie."

Teacher Bonnie first said it wasn't a problem just change into my bathing suit. Brendan said boys call bathing suits shorts. The pee was still coming down off my shorts that were not my swimming shorts. Nico said go tell Stephanie to get changed. That's what I did then Bonnie washed out the shorts and underwear and hung them on the bars you can't play on in the pool place. I told Bonnie to not tell people that those were my underwear and she said she would not. They were all dry at going home time so I put them on. In the bus I found out from Ethan Roberts that the alligator was really just a log!"

Bean Boozled

Never ever (ever!) play Bean Boozled; you may think you're getting a yummy strawberry banana smoothie but you also could be getting a dead fish tasting jelly belly. Or, you may be so lucky to get what looks like a delicious lime, but after chewing the jelly belly you discover the taste of cut grass on your palate. Oh, did you think that cute green speckled jelly belly was juicy pear? Ha! Fooled you! It's like eating a disgusting booger. **Kyla** was definitely the bravest bean boozler of them all. Dead fish? Barf? Rotten egg? No problem! She would try them all. We even made a special trip to the Jelly Belly Factory to learn more about how they are made. When we arrived, we had a morning snack outside. Some of the school agers noticed jelly bellies on the ground, and wanted to try the ultimate bean-boozled challenge- eek!

We all passed on this opportunity and tried the clean (and still gross) jelly bellies inside. One of our big questions was who in the world tastes these things as their job?! We found out that there really are taste testers for Bean Boozled (Gross!) and they have a special small room they stay in with the door closed because they smell so bad! Most of us agreed that job did not sound worth it. Yuck! All of the teachers even played this summer with us, and most of them have now sworn off of jelly bellies for life. The last day of summer program, there was a crazy idea circulating- try 3-4 bean boozles at the same time, and then swallow them. My eyes are getting big and my stomach is getting queasy just writing this down and remembering! Soap, dirt, sausage, and "toots" were the 4 bean boozles in this challenge. Many of the children chose to try this- and succeeded. Teacher Stephanie felt like she should try too since so many of the school agers were brave enough. Teacher Bonnie held her ground and gave a very clear, "No thank you ever." We all agreed it was the worst thing we had ever tried.

Amazing Fun Facts

Sabine was sure she could not swim out to Teacher Stephanie in the pool from the wall and she did...first try!

Beckham found out that underwear, when tucked inside shorts that are no longer on your body, can escape you. Beware!

Maya found out that when you put a \$20 bill in a vending machine, you get back all your change in quarters! (\$19 in quarters to be exact...in weight, in the backpack!)

Teacher Stephanie held the wrestling, crying aloud child ever so lovingly in her arms ensuring safety for all. The demonstration of the friend's disgruntled feelings lasted a very long time. **Killi** walked by and simply summed up the entire situation with encouragement by stating, "Yep, just a work in progress."

The wheels on the bus really do go round and round; it also matters which bus you get on. And, if it's the wrong one, just get off, cross the street, and go back the way you came. All Day Passes are great in this situation. And, hey! Trusting, unsuspecting friends will never notice...except for some like **MacKenzie, Lexi, and Beckham** who find it interesting how many Trader Joes and TJ Max's are along one path.

Sophie's description of her "summer-appropriate-field-trip" shoes: My shoes are a mix of crocs and sneakers. They're shoes and you can wear them in the water. They're two things like amphibians."

Beckham was the star of the Wacky Water Works show at Discovery Kingdom! They chose a few members of the audience to come down to the large water tank and take a picture with the seal lions. They called down, "The boy in the blue shirt with the face paint!" Now, our groups did not have any time to get face paint on, which Beckham made very clear to the Discovery Kingdom employees. In fact, this special face paint was actually his sunscreen! No sunburns for DLC.

One of our "regular" bus drivers named Freida would drop us off right in front of DLC. This was especially appreciated during our heat wave weeks.; however, she continued to stop there for the duration of our summer. Each time, **Jackson** said, "Hey! This bus stop is invisible!" We made Freida a tie dye and a cool bus thank you poster. We were always glad to see her! We even ran into her at the bus stop at Arden Mall after the movie theater as she was switching busses to go on her break! It was the perfect opportunity to thank her for her kindness and present her gifts. We even got a chance to

take a picture with her!



Remy discovered that an Icee Pop left on his towel while he swam took on another scientific form that was not enjoyed quite as much as when in its solid state. Also, even in the heat, loose dollar bills fly from your towel.

Every summer we take the kids to Howe Pond to go fishing. This pond is stocked often so that kids in the Sacramento area can have the opportunity to fish- and catch something!

Mason caught the first catfish...that got away! **Clover** must have been fishing for flying fish because the bait on her hook flew round and round and round above the pond...until it became a brain teasing tangle. **Teagan** thought putting a wiggly worm on the hook was too hard so she just threw the worm to the fish; she couldn't catch any fish with this new technique.

Sometimes, if you stand at a bus stop waiting for Bus 1, a motorcycle police officer will bring you special coupons for free slurpies!

Autumn: "After school I went to my bedroom and opened the door. I saw a leprechaun in my toy box throwing toys. I asked him why he was throwing my toys and he threw a Barbie at me! It hit me right on the nose! I just ran away!"

MacKenzie: "Once I saw a dog sticking his nose in a hole. The dog was a girl named Sophie. All the sudden she jumped back because something stuck pine needles in her nose. The dog ran away. So, I peeked and there was a leprechaun in the hole and he was

mad! I just ran away too! But I saw the leprechaun who was so little like just 11 feet tall and he had a green suit, and brown pants, and little tiny black shoes."









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