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## A Household Word: Fantasy Camp

By Carol Band

My son Lewis has been begging ... begging to go to Space Camp.

"You get to experience weightlessness," he says as he clicks through the slick-looking Space Camp Web site. "I've always wanted to be weightless."

This from a kid who weighs 85 pounds.

Space camp is in Alabama ... in July. And, it's indoors, so instead of sailing or building fires, Lewis would learn how to drink Tang from a tube. I'm not saying that Space Camp is a bad idea ... it's probably loads of fun and it might even be educational. But it's not cheap.

Fantasies never are. But if parents are willing to pay, there are all kinds of camps that cater to making the wildest dreams of kids ages 8 to 18 come true.

There are rock 'n' roll camps, where kids can learn to prance in front of a microphone like Miley Cyrus or shred on bass guitar with some guy who used to play in a band with Eddie Vedder's cousin. Instead of a gimp lanyard, campers come home with a demo tape. There are camps where your 8-year-old aspiring model can strut her stuff on the catwalk and perfect her pout. There are computer camps and wizarding camps and spy camps and sports camps and junior senator camps. There's even a CSI camp, where kids learn how to identify decomposing bodies. Hmmm ... that's some fantasy.

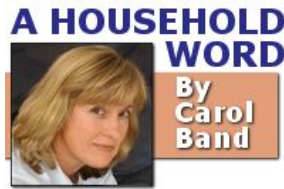
But I have fantasies of my own. Here are some camps where I'd like to send my kids:

**Camp Wee Washum** – This camp, equipped with state-of-the-art appliances, encourages youngsters to take responsibility for their own dirty laundry. Campers receive hands-on instruction in loading the washer, transferring wet clothes to the dryer and cleaning the lint trap. Special overnight sessions explore matching socks, folding contour sheets and putting clean clothes into bureau drawers. All campers receive a personalized laundry bag and a bottle of detergent.

**Camp Lemmegetapen** – Frustrated because George Clooney called your house looking for a date for the Academy Awards and your kid forgot to tell you? Help your children improve their communication skills at this fun-filled summer camp where programs include: "After Hello: How to Take a Message," "Writing Legibly" and "Using the Call Back Function." Advanced seminars for older campers include "I-Don't-Care-If-You-Know-It's-Not-For-You-Answer-the-Darn-Phone-Anyway," "Grunt If You Can Hear Me: The Art of Phone Conversation" and "Bill or Will or Something: The Importance of Last Names." All campers receive a working pen and a "While You Were Out" message pad.

**Handy Camp** – If your child loves arts and crafts, this camp will channel that interest into practical, real-life skills. Located in the spacious aisles of a suburban home supplies superstore, professional tradesmen help children master the art of upholstery, furniture refinishing, basic carpentry, plumbing and HVAC. Campers should bring their own tools and an idea for a project that they'd like to complete.

**Camp Moweed'n'rake** – Situated on acres of grassy suburban sprawl, this camp



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gives youngsters ages 7-17 a chance to spend the summer outdoors while learning lawn care basics. Combining science and landscaping, daylong seminars focus on maintaining an existing lawn with emphasis on weed identification, raking and mowing. Special workshops on seeding, watering and selecting and applying appropriate fertilizers are available for advanced campers.

Summer camps, even ones that focus on forensics, fill up quickly. In fact, it's probably too late to sign Lewis up for Space Camp this year. Instead, he'll spend two weeks at a basic YMCA camp where he'll swim and sail and make gimp lanyards. He'll learn all twelve verses of some of the most annoying songs ever composed and he'll have a blast—even without being weightless.

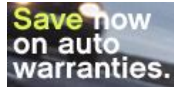
*Carol Band is fantasizing about Spa Camp. It's a lot like Space Camp, but instead of weightlessness, she's wants to experience weight loss. [Read more of Carol's new book, A Household Word, and check out her blog.](#)*

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