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By Jon Sapper

Camping Season is Here

Summer is here. What a great time to spend quality time with the family enjoying the outdoors.....like camping.

I used to love to camp. Getting ready was fun. The night before I'd make a list of things to take...tent, ice chests, cook stove, sleeping bags, mats, fishing poles, bikes, bathing suits, sunscreen, hats, balls, Frisbees and clothes. Seems like a long list, but I couldn't find half the stuff anyway. I packed it into my mid-size car. I don't even want to think what we looked like.

After two hours of driving we finally got to the campsite. It was early evening and somewhat overcast. I said, "I'll set up the tent." I thought I remembered how to do it. But an hour later the kids said, "When is the tent going to be ready? It's getting dark." Realizing I needed an engineering degree to figure this out, I said to the kids, "Tomorrow if you don't quit talking to me. Go eat some snacks, cause I don't have enough time to fix dinner." After tossing the 5 left over tent poles back into the car, the tent was up,..... kind of.

"Ok kids. Let's get into the tent and go to sleep. I'm tired." "Why can't I have my phone?..one of the kids asked. "Because were camping and you don't use phones when you're camping. We're just going to enjoy each other's company." "Can't I just call my friend?" "No I said, we're just going to have fun as a family this weekend." The kids rolled their eyes. Finally nodding off, I was awakened a few hours later by my daughter who said, "I'm cold". I said, "Bring your knees up to your stomach and be like a ball. You'll feel warmer." "But, I don't like to be cold." I said, "Make a ball!" No more noise. Two hours pass. I'm awakened again....."Dad, what's that noise?" I replied, "You don't know what rain sounds like?" She said, "Let's go to a motel room." "No, it's 2:30 in the morning. Just go to sleep." But dad, the rain is coming into the tent and my sleeping bag is wet." "Make a ball!"

Morning comes and I'm hungry. I brought bacon, eggs and pancakes. It's not fun trying to cook that stuff in the rain. But it is tapering off. After a hastily made breakfast, I said, "Let's play Frisbee". That's what families do when camping. "I

don't want to play Frisbee, I'm cold. I don't like camping." "Well, pretend we aren't camping, we just went for a ride." "Dad, I want to go for a ride....back home." Alright, let's go. Two hours later we're on the road headed home. The kids are singing 99 bottles of beer on the wall. They have been deprived of using a phone for 26 hours and you'd think they received a prison sentence. We arrive home and the kids say, "We can set up the tent in the backyard." I said, "Go to your room and play video games."

Have a wonderful summer.

This has been Jon sapper for Community Comment.