

Sample Article (not published)

Summer Stargazing: 4 National parks where kids can learn while making lasting memories.

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Summer is a great time to get outside and spend quality time with your kids. It's also nice to kick back and relax in the great outdoors while making lasting memories with your family.

Going on a camping trip to a national park during the summer can become a family tradition filled with many fun activities. Things like setting up tents, making fires, hiking, eating s'mores, and looking at the stars at night are what make lasting memories.

According to Flavio Salvati, an astronomy expert at moonandback.com, stargazing is a great way to get kids interested in STEM and astronomy. He says stargazing is a way to “harness their curiosity, imagination, and a sense of shared exploration and discovery”.

Prepare for your trip

If you're new to stargazing and don't know what to do, check out NASA's [Watch the Skies](#) blog and their [Night Sky Network](#) to plan your camping trip around cool celestial events. You'll be able to identify the constellations and the different phases of the moon, make wishes on some shooting stars, experience a meteor shower, and even track the [International Space Station](#) (ISS).

You also don't need to invest in expensive stargazing gear to get started. "When you're first getting started with astronomy for kids, all you really need is to go out there and stargaze with your eyes only," Salvati says. But if you want to get a closer look at the stars, Salvati suggests getting a pair of [7x50 binoculars](#), which are popular among stargazers.

You can also download [The Night Sky](#) app to help you find and identify celestial objects in 3D. This app is like having a planetarium on your phone.

Camping with kids

Nowadays, there is no need to invest in expensive camping gear. Companies like [Arrive Outdoors](#), [Xscape Pod](#), and [Outdoors Geek](#) allow you to rent your camping equipment for a fraction of the cost. These companies have camping equipment for both adults and kids that can be rented by the day and delivered directly to your front door.

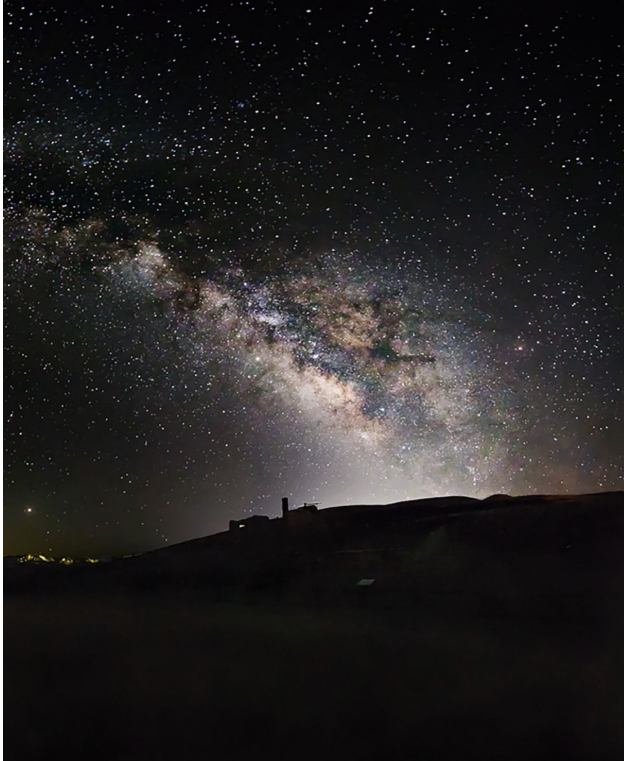
While camping with kids is fun, it can also be challenging. The Outdoors Geek website suggests that you prepare for any challenging moment by doing the following:

- **Being enthusiastic** and having a positive attitude.
- **Involve your kids** in the preparation of the camping trip.
- **Give them responsibilities** like carrying their camping gear.
- **Pack some toys** to keep them entertained.
- **Bring your bikes** to avoid walking long distances.
- **Bring plenty of snacks** to keep hunger at bay while you prepare meals.

Where to go

Now that you are prepped and ready, it's time to pack up the family and hit the road. Get ready to enjoy these kid-friendly national parks that are perfect for stargazing:

[Death Valley National Park](#)



This California park is one of the best places in the United States to go stargazing, but it is also the “hottest, driest, and lowest national park” in the nation, according to the National Park Service. It is home to some of the darkest skies in the lower 48 states, making it a great place to see the Milky Way and other celestial objects. There are a couple of campgrounds in the park that are kid-friendly, such as [Stovepipe Wells Campground](#) and [Furnace Creek Campground](#).

Photo credit: Instagram [@deathvalleynps](#)

[Big Bend National Park](#)



Texas is another great option for stargazing. The park is located in a remote area, so there is very little light pollution, and it would be a great idea to have a park ranger provide a free expert-guided moon walk. There are several campgrounds in the park that are kid-friendly, such as [Chisos Basin Campground](#) and [Cottonwood Campground](#).

Photo credit: Instagram [@bigbendnps](#)
by NPS/D. Lombardi

[Zion National Park](#)



Utah is another great place to camp with kids and stargaze. The park is located in a high-altitude desert, which means that the air is clear and there is little light pollution. Take a look at these kid-friendly campgrounds, such as [Watchman Campground](#) and [South Campground](#).

Photo credit: Instagram [@zionnps](#)

[Yellowstone National Park](#)



Wyoming is also a great place to camp and stargaze with your kids. The park is home to a variety of landscapes, including mountains, forests, and lakes. This diversity of landscapes makes it a great place to see a variety of stars and constellations. Take a look at these campgrounds in the park that are kid-friendly, such as [Madison Campground](#) and [Fishing Bridge Campground](#).

Photo credit: Instagram [@yellowstoneps](#)

Exploring the outdoors while camping in the summer can be a great way to simply relax and enjoy each other's company. It's a perfect time to disconnect from electronics and not only reconnect with nature but also with each other. And there's nothing quite like sitting around a campfire in one of our beautiful national parks with your family, telling stories, and gazing up at the stars.