

Kinderperspectief Camps All Aboard 2019



**18 youngsters, 18 unique people,
18 unique lives, 18 unique plans for the future!**



Day 1: Travel and introduction

After a long journey, 4 students (volunteers) are ready to receive us. The youngsters meet for the first time during dinner. The first international conversations begin there. Slightly difficult due to the different language barriers. In the first joint meeting at the camp we welcome all youngsters and together with the youngsters we decide which rules we will apply.

"It's really nice to be here in Koscierzyna, Mala Szarlota. Finally after a long day of travel we arrived safe at the camp location. First I would like to have some sleep: tomorrow we will see what will happen!"

Day 2: Goals and a traditional Polish dance!

In the first part of the day outdoor activities take place. All youngsters are divided into 3 groups and participate with their group leaders in various games in the forest. During the workshops in the afternoon, the youngsters get to know each other by interviewing each other in pairs. They ask each other questions about their values, interests and important things in life. Then they think about their goals for this camp. This is placed on a special designed spider web. At the end of the exchange this spider web will be filled in by the youngsters again. The aim is to visualize the growth in their development. In the evening the youngsters enjoy rowing and swimming and there is an opportunity to learn a traditional Polish dance!



Day 3: The Chicken and Prick the donkey!

In the morning we separated again in groups to participate in team building activities. In my group we are going to work with "the chicken". "The chicken" is a large A, made of wooden beams. At the top there are 8 ropes that are held by the youngsters to keep the A stable in this way. A participant stands on the crossbar of the A. The assignment is to make the chicken move. This requires good cooperation between the youngsters and the participant who is on the chicken. After practicing this, we have to follow a course over a "bridge" that is full of "stones" (wooden blocks). The chicken must kick away the stones. Every stone you miss yields half a penalty point. All youngsters created and presented their own lifeline in the afternoon. During the presentation, the youngsters receive a lot of positive feedback on their story. It is remarkable that there is also respect and sometimes awe for what some youngsters have experienced and how things are going in the different countries with the help they receive. After this there is a challenge for those who want to swim back and forth over the lake. The swimmers are encouraged by the youngsters in canoes and pedal boats. Our "small Maarten van de Weijden (famous Dutch swimmer) tour". The atmosphere is great. Those staying at home receive us enthusiastically upon arrival. In the evening we listen to presentations about each other's countries, each with their own culture and customs. The evening ends with Dutch games such as donkey jab and a chair dance.

Dag 4: Mindmapping and Pancakes!

Today, during the workshop module, the mind map exercises are central. The youngsters work on their own individual mind map in which they write down their dreams, goals, passions, skills, hobbies and ambitions. In the afternoon and evening it is time for the intercultural culinary evening! Each country must prepare 2 traditional dishes. Youngsters are also responsible for the preparation of the restaurant. The result is a fantastic 7-course dinner with delicious dishes! The atmosphere in the group is super. From soup to pancakes, from a stew to sauerkraut; it's all part of this culinary event.

"During the outdoor activity I learned that communication is very important, even if you cannot communicate with words".



Dag 5: Qualities and helping hands!

The youngsters start playing the quality game. They choose qualities that they think they have and the youngsters give each other qualities. At the end of this exercise all qualities were discussed in subgroups. There is a lot of time for compliments and recognition of the qualities.

After the quality game, the youngsters entered their "helping hand". In the helping hand, the youngsters fill in the persons / organizations they can appeal to if they get stuck or need help with a part of their future plan. Another part of the future plan workshop is writing a letter to itself. They write about experiences they want to gain in the coming years, goals they want to achieve and the people they want to interact with. The youngsters have written a date on the envelope on which they want to receive their own written letter in the future.

In the afternoon we hold an interim evaluation in which we discuss their impressions of the camp with the youngsters. The youngsters can give feedback and suggestions about what they want to change or improve during the rest of the exchange. During the outside night game the youngsters are divided into 3 teams. The groups go into the woods and play 3 team building competitions. Then there is a campfire and an extensive BBQ. The youngsters enjoy the night games. In the beginning some youngsters were a bit scared to go into the forest at night, but ultimately prevails in most young people the sense of joy and pride!

"I learned that making a strategy is necessary to work together with others."

Dag 6: Sailing and futureplans!

The youngsters themselves form groups of youngsters they want to go to sail with for the next 3 days. The groups consist of youngsters from different countries, this means that only English is spoken (= appointment to help and understand each other better). When someone does not understand the instructions, the youngsters help each other by translating it into their own language.

The sailing activities are great for the team building process, because all youngsters must work together as a team and have to communicate well to move the boat on the water! After sailing, the youngsters work hard on the final part of the future plan: the 5-year future plan itself. All youngsters have worked carefully and in detail. In the afternoon the youngsters can try out various sports activities, including Kube, Polish numbers, Boule and Skies. Some of those activities are new to the youngsters. That is why they must communicate well within the team to ensure that everyone understands the meaning of the game. Afterwards - and to win the competitions - the youngsters must work together as a team.

The last activity on this day is an international disco. During the day, the youngsters create together a playlist with different songs from different countries. They also show each other "typical" dances from their own country.



Dag 7: Olympic games

First, the groups formed from day 1, are adjusted due to language problems. The youngsters have solved this problem themselves and formed groups in which everyone felt comfortable: at least 2 young people from each country, so that they can help each other understanding the languages and understand the instruction. Then they sail onto the lake and improve their sailing skills. Again an activity that develops teamwork among the youngsters well. After sailing, the youngsters present in small groups their future plans to each other. During the presentations, the youngsters can ask questions to the others. This gives the youngsters inspiration, strength and confirmation! In the afternoon, a sports competition is being prepared, called the Olympic Games. The same sports activities as yesterday, but this time competitive. Every game is enjoyed by the youngsters and it is already clear that some of them can take their losses more easily than the days before. The city of Koscierzyna is visited to show the youngsters a small Polish city. They have a cultural experience and can taste Polish food, visit some shops and make contact with the locals.

"We won because we worked together".

Dag 8: Free time and Certification!

After breakfast we say goodbye to the first Social workers, who have to leave for another camp. After this there is free time for the youngsters. Many take the canoes and pedal boats and enjoy the wonderful weather and the outdoor activities once again. Other youngsters have nice conversations with each other and exchange information on their future plans.

In the evening it is time for the farewell ceremony. After a beautiful slideshow with photos of the camp, it is time to hand out the Youthpass. This certificate is proof for the youngsters of successfully participating in the international youth exchange All Aboard.



Dag 9: Time to say goodbye!

The day of departure! All youngsters get up early to say goodbye to each other. After many tears and goodbye hugs it is time to go home. The best part of the day of departure is that every country (except the youngsters from Poland) meets the other countries again at the airport. After hugging again, we travel back home by plane. Once home, the international WhatsApp group explodes. In the first days after this exchange, more than 1,000 messages are sent to each other each day.

At the moment, the youngsters have the idea of organizing a new exchange themselves.

"Remember, this is not the end but just the beginning of a new story!"

"This was the best week of my life, I met so many new great friends!"

"I really have faith in my own future plan!"

Bas Rodijk
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