

What will it be this year?
From sports instruction
to special-needs programs,
area camps cater to all.

By Wendy Ginsberg
INQUIRER SUBURBAN STAFF

In 1980, Rabbi Julie Greenberg, then 23, created a summer camp that brought together the children of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgendered parents.

She began without much more than a spigot, a Coleman stove, some tents, trenches that served as toilets, about 15 campers and just a few staff members.

For the last two decades, the seed that she planted has grown into a camp serving more than 80 boys and girls, who often bond over the prejudice they face when they leave the safety of Mountain Meadow camp. Three years ago, Mountain Meadow moved to a Girl Scout campground in Newfield, Gloucester County, a home that camp officials plan to keep.

Greenberg, who raises her five children with a gay male parenting partner, knows firsthand the struggles of a nontraditional family. She no longer sits at the helm of Mountain Meadows, but her children still attend the two-week summer camp.

From soccer-skills day camps to acting camps to instruction for special-needs children, South Jersey offers a panoply of options. There are about 74 camps in Camden, Burlington and Gloucester Counties, according to Chris Gage, spokeswoman for the state Department of Health and Senior Services, and most are day camps.

Mountain Meadow is one of many South Jersey camps that help and entertain children with special needs and interests. As these and other camps are readied for the 2001 summer session, parents across the area enjoy a range of choices for that highlight of their children's summer.