



Where lifetime memories
are made.

EMPOWERED CAMPING

*The Most valuable AND affordable
vacation you will ever take.*

Due to the many stresses that single parents deal with, it is vital that they find a healthy way to relax, recoup, and revitalize. Many families take a vacation in order to let go of their day to day demands. Unfortunately, many single parents are unable to afford traditional vacations. One income families often live paycheck to paycheck without room for anything extra. That is why in 2017, Village of Life held their first annual Empowered Camping event.

The event was held at Nine Mile Ranch near Wellington, UT June 23-25, 2017. The campground is nicely situated in an area surrounded by cottonwood trees, which provided some cool shade, and a shallow stream for everyone to play in. Flushing toilets were available for anyone new to camping and the great outdoors.

Families were asked to pay \$20 for one night or \$35 for the entire weekend. In exchange, we provided breakfast and dinner for everyone and covered the campground fees. This left families only responsible for their own lunches, drinks, and camping gear. All things they could bring without having to purchase a cooler if they did not already have one. The food was generously donated by Lynn's Market in Price, UT, Costco in Spanish Fork, UT, and the Roberts family in St. George, UT.

Leading up to the event, several "how to" posts were shared via Facebook to help families prepare for the weekend while saving money. We shared ideas on how to pack enough water without buying expensive water jugs and how to make a bed roll using items they had at home. Checklists were provided that indicated must have items for survival and nice to have items for comfort.



Village of Life
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At the event, each family was given a homemade camp toilet (shown on the right), also known as a groover. The toilets were made by Village of Life volunteers using recycled paint buckets, a bit of paint, and pool noodles similar to the one shown here. We had one father and four mothers and their children in attendance for a total of 20 campers.



One family of six registered but did not make it to the event due to a medical emergency. Participants drove from Ogden, Salt Lake, Provo, and Price, Utah to attend. Everyone was required to help care for the fire and cook their own food. They learned how to roast hot dogs and marshmallows over the fire for dinner. For breakfast, they learned how to make camp omelets using zip lock baggies and boiling water. After the event, the leftover food was given to one family who Village of Life volunteers at the event deemed the worthiest.



During the day, our volunteer guide, Jared Chiara, took us hiking and exploring the many works of art, shelters, and granaries left behind by the Fremont culture and Ute people. At night, campfire stories were shared, and everyone had a chance to share a story of their own.

We had multiple families ask if we had any gear they could borrow during the event or if their camp fees could be waived because they could not find a way to work it into their budget.

In 2018, we plan to take a total of 50 people camping (approximately 12 families depending on size). In addition to learning how to camp and cook over a fire, we plan to add self-care topics to our event. While children play together around camp ground, parents will be able to take a yoga class, water aerobic class, or learn the benefits of meditation. They will then be able to take these skills home with them to continue to reduce the stress of doing it all alone even when they cannot get away for a weekend vacation. We also hope to find sponsors to cover the cost of equipping first time campers with the most essential gear for those who do not have anything.