



Explorers

Summer Camp 2025



The Quest: Big questions. Real relationships. (Pedagogic Project)

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About Alo ! Mik

Alo ! Mik is an Albanian NGO inspired by Christian faith to serve vulnerable children and families. Alo ! Mik has been operating in Albania since 2003, running different projects to ensure holistic wellbeing of children, especially for the more vulnerable. Alo ! Mik's area of expertise ranges from direct interventions with vulnerable children and their families, to empowerment of local actors through training, networking and resources sharing.

Our vision is to see children flourishing and being agents of change in their community.

Our mission is to offer life changing care to children, bringing people together on a journey from brokenness to wholeness.

Alo! Mik has been organizing day camps in villages since 2005, reaching children from underserved communities, and has been running residential camps at Eden Park for the past 10 years. In total, we've welcomed over 15,000 children, providing them with a safe and supportive environment for fun, learning, and personal growth. Our camps focus on building resilience, teamwork, and a sense of belonging, while nurturing the whole child—body, mind, and spirit. develop life skills, form lasting relationships, and grow in confidence. This ongoing work is at the heart of our mission to support vulnerable children and empower them to become agents of change in their communities.

About the author

Ruth Vergnon is a dedicated professional with a strong background in child protection and education. She graduated as a Primary School Teacher and holds a Master's degree in Advanced Child Protection, along with an advanced certificate in Complex Developmental Trauma. Ruth is passionate about working with children from difficult backgrounds and has dedicated her career to supporting and empowering vulnerable children. Her expertise in trauma-informed care and her deep understanding of the challenges faced by children from hard places make her a valuable asset in the field of child welfare.

Some of the activities in our camp program are thoughtfully adapted from:

- *“Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings”, World Vision International and IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, Copenhagen, 2018*
- *“Therapy games for Kids, 100 activities to boost Self Esteem, Improve communication and Build Coping Skills”, Christine Kolil, Rockridge press, 2022*

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Summer Camp Program 2025

Approach & Methodology

Generation Alpha

Generation Alpha, encompassing children born from 2010 onwards, is the first cohort to grow up entirely within the digital age. These digital natives are characterized by their seamless interaction with technology, having been surrounded by advanced devices and platforms since birth. This constant connectivity has not only shaped their learning styles and social interactions but has also influenced their expectations regarding authenticity and real-world experiences. Despite their proficiency with digital tools, Generation Alpha exhibits a pronounced desire for genuine human connections and tangible experiences. This inclination stems from their awareness of the limitations of virtual interactions and a yearning for meaningful, face-to-face relationships in a fast-paced, ever-changing world.

Objectives of the camp

Overall objective:

To guide children in exploring key values such as cohesion, authenticity & diversity, belonging & inclusion, resilience, and purpose, while developing essential skills like building healthy relationships with others, embracing their true selves, and discovering their unique purpose in life.

Specific objectives:

- **Connection and Cohesion:** To foster connection and cohesion among children by helping them build meaningful relationships with their peers and with God. Through teamwork and collaboration, children will develop essential skills like building relationships, communication, and problem-solving, while exploring the value of connection in different contexts.
- **Authenticity and Self-Expression:** To learn to embrace and express our true selves, recognize the value of diversity, and build self-awareness in both personal and team contexts.
- **Belonging and Inclusion:** To help children understand the importance of belonging and inclusion, and to foster empathy by encouraging them to collaborate, support each other, and recognize their unique contributions within a community.
- **Resilience and Problem-Solving:** To help children develop resilience and problem-solving skills by teaching them how to overcome challenges, restore

broken relationships, and persevere in difficult situations, emphasizing the importance of effort, forgiveness, and healing.

- **Purpose and Goal-Setting:** To inspire children to reflect on their purpose in life, set meaningful goals, and understand the importance of building strong, lasting relationships.

Methodology

The approach integrates experiential learning, teamwork, self-reflection, and life skills to foster authentic connections, resilience, and a sense of belonging.

1. **Experiential Learning:** Children engage in hands-on activities like team-building challenges and creative expression, learning by doing and reflecting on their experiences.
2. **Collaborative Learning and Teamwork:** Activities such as building friendships and designing future projects emphasize communication, empathy, and problem-solving skills.
3. **Reflection and Self-Discovery:** Reflection exercises allow children to gain self-awareness, understand relationships, and set personal goals.
4. **Key Values and Life Skills:** Activities reinforce connection, authenticity, resilience, and purpose, helping children develop meaningful relationships and life skills.
5. **Holistic Approach to Well-Being:** Physical, emotional, and mental health are nurtured through mindfulness, relaxation, and personal empowerment exercises.
6. **Digital Balance:** The program promotes offline activities that foster real-world connections, helping children disconnect from screens and engage with each other.
7. **Fun, Joy, and Celebration:** The camp celebrates achievements and growth through activities like Talent Night and reflection sessions, making learning an enjoyable experience.

By combining these elements, the camp ensures a balanced, engaging, and impactful experience that supports the growth of Generation Alpha.

Main activities

Each day, children will have the opportunity to participate in turn at five main activities, ensuring a well-rounded experience that nurtures various aspects of their growth. These activities are designed to complement one another and support the development of key skills and values.

The **Art Activity** will allow children to express their creativity and explore their authentic selves. The **Psychosocial Activity** will provide a safe space for children to work on emotional intelligence, empathy, and resilience. The **Challenges Activity** will encourage teamwork and problem-solving, fostering communication and collaboration. Through **Spiritual Nurture**, children will connect with their spiritual values, reflect on their purpose, and build meaningful relationships with God and others. Finally, the **Swimming Pool** session will promote physical health and provide a fun and relaxing environment for children to bond through games and activities.

Each group of children will rotate through these activities, ensuring they engage in a balanced mix of creative, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical development throughout the camp.

Detailed activities are provided below.

Complementary activities

In addition to the main activities, several **complementary activities** will be available to further enrich the children's camp experience:

1. **Question Box in Small Groups (Morning Session):** This activity provides children with the opportunity to ask any questions anonymously, creating a safe space for them to express concerns, curiosity, or reflections without fear of judgment. This helps address specific individual needs and promotes open communication within the group.
2. **Free Sport Activities:** Children will have the option to engage in various sports activities of their choosing, allowing them to take part in physical exercises that they enjoy. This provides a sense of autonomy and encourages healthy competition and teamwork while fostering physical wellness.
3. **Preparation for the Talent Show:** Throughout the camp, children will have the chance to prepare for a Talent Show, where they can showcase their individual talents, whether in music, dance, acting, or other forms of creative expression. This activity promotes self-confidence, creativity, and a sense of accomplishment, culminating in a celebration of the children's unique abilities.

These complementary activities are designed to support the main camp objectives by offering diverse opportunities for self-expression, physical engagement, and emotional reflection.

Daily life

Daily Life at the camp will be organized to provide a balance between activities, rest, and personal well-being. Here's an overview of the key moments of the day:

1. **Meals:** Meals will be shared in groups, creating a moment of togetherness and interaction. Children will have the opportunity to talk, bond, and practice kindness during meal times. The menu will be balanced and tailored to their nutritional needs to ensure they have the energy and well-being required for the activities.
2. **Break Time:** Each day will include designated break times where children can relax, socialize freely, or participate in recreational activities. These breaks will also allow for the strengthening of friendships and encourage informal conversations, fostering the development of authentic relationships.
3. **Hygiene:** Personal hygiene will be an important part of daily life. Children will have designated times for handwashing, showering, and maintaining good hygiene. Camp staff will encourage healthy hygiene practices while creating a respectful and caring environment.
4. **Sleep Time:** A structured sleep routine will be essential for ensuring that children are well-rested. Each child will have their designated sleeping area, and quiet time will be implemented before bed to promote restful sleep. Children will be encouraged to rest fully so that they can wake up refreshed and ready for the day's activities.

These aspects will be an integral part of the daily routine to support the physical and emotional well-being of the children while maintaining a safe and structured environment.

Child Safety & Wellbeing

Creating a physically and emotionally safe environment is at the heart of our camp experience at Eden Park. This section outlines the key components of our child safety and wellbeing approach, including the presentation of our facilities, our staff and volunteers, our safeguarding policy, and our trauma-informed practices.

A Safe & Welcoming Space – Eden Park Facilities

Eden Park is designed to provide a secure, organized, and nurturing space where children can thrive. The camp is fully enclosed with controlled entry points, ensuring that children remain safe throughout their stay.

Key features include:

- Clearly defined sleeping zones, separated by gender
- Clean bathroom and shower facilities, maintained multiple times a day
- Designated activity zones for games, crafts, and group sessions
- First aid station
- Clearly marked emergency exits and safety assembly points

All children are introduced to the layout and safety rules on Day 1 through a camp tour and a welcome briefing.

A Team You Can Trust – Our Staff & Volunteers

Our camp team is made up of dedicated individuals who are trained, background-checked, and committed to children's wellbeing. Each camper is connected to a group leader who accompanies them through their daily activities and is their first point of contact.

Key roles include:

- Camp Coordinator – overall responsibility for safety, coordination, and team leadership
- Activity Leaders – plan and lead specific workshops, sports, games, and creative sessions
- Group Leaders – accompany and care for small groups of campers, day and night, fostering connection and safety

- Volunteers – assist group leaders and activity leaders, accompany groups, and help create a welcoming atmosphere
- Support Staff – ensure smooth logistics, including kitchen, cleaning, and facility maintenance
- First Aid & Wellbeing Staff – trained to respond to both physical health and emotional regulation needs

Camp Supervision Ratio

To ensure both safety and meaningful connection, we follow a supervision ratio of:

- 1 adult for every 8 to 10 children (depending on age group and needs)
- 1 group leader is directly responsible for a group of children throughout the camp
- Additional floating staff and volunteers support activities, transitions, and special needs

This allows us to maintain close supervision, individual attention, and a relational approach, where every child is known, seen, and supported.

Food, Mealtimes & Wellbeing

Mealtimes are an essential part of the camp experience — not only for nutrition but also for building community and a sense of security. At Eden Park, we ensure that food is safe, healthy, and culturally sensitive.

Our approach includes:

- Balanced meals prepared by trained kitchen staff with a focus on fresh, wholesome ingredients
- Three main meals and one snack daily, served at regular times to support routine and regulation
- Separated mealtime environment, with group leaders present to create a relaxed and respectful atmosphere
- Consideration of food allergies, intolerances, and dietary needs, which must be communicated in advance
- Encouraging, never forcing children to try new foods — we offer gentle support and alternatives when needed

Our Safeguarding Commitment

We are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and empowering environment for every child. Our Child Safeguarding Policy is based on international best practices and includes the following key principles:

- Every child has the right to feel safe, be respected, and be heard
- Adults are not allowed to be alone with a child in a private space
- Physical discipline, shouting, or belittling language is strictly prohibited
- Children will be supported through positive, non-punitive discipline approaches
- A safe reporting system is in place for any concerns or incidents

A Trauma-Informed Approach to Camp Life

We recognize that some children may come with personal histories of adversity, separation, or trauma. Our goal is to create a trauma-sensitive environment where healing, safety, and trust are prioritized.

Our staff receive in-depth training in trauma-competent care, equipping them to recognize and respond to children's emotional and behavioral needs with empathy, patience, and respect. Volunteers receive orientation that prepares them to support this approach and to respond appropriately to signs of distress.

We are sensitive to behaviors that may be linked to trauma—such as withdrawal, outbursts, anxiety, or difficulties with transitions—and we respond with compassion and understanding.

Our trauma-informed principles include:

- Safety: Routines, clear expectations, and consistent boundaries help children feel secure
- Connection: Building caring, predictable relationships with trusted adults
- Empowerment: Offering choices, voice, and encouragement
- Regulation: Helping children manage strong emotions through supportive, non-punitive approaches

Our Approach to Spiritual Nurture

At Eden Park, we recognize that spiritual growth is a personal journey and that each child comes with their own unique beliefs and experiences. Our approach to **spiritual nurture** is based on **respect, choice, and openness**. We are committed to creating a space where children feel free to explore their spirituality while being respected for their individual beliefs.

Our approach includes:

- **Respect for Diversity and Beliefs:** We honor and respect the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of every child, recognizing that spirituality and faith are deeply personal matters. While the Bible stories are a central part of our spiritual nurture, we present them in a way that is inclusive and respectful of all beliefs.
- **Non-Coercion:** Spiritual activities, including prayer and worship are offered as invitations, not requirements. Children are encouraged to express their own thoughts and beliefs, and they are free to choose whether or not to participate in any activity. We respect each child's decision, ensuring that participation is voluntary and that no one is ever pressured or forced to take part.
- **Safe Space for Exploration:** We create an open environment where children feel safe to ask questions, explore their faith, and discuss spiritual matters with adults who are available to listen without judgment.

An overview of the program

Storyline:

The children embark on a journey through different landscapes, each representing an aspect of their personal growth and understanding of the world. Along the way, they will uncover five important keys—each one designed to help them better understand themselves and their surroundings. Guided by a map provided at the start, the children will navigate challenges, with each key hidden in a unique place that requires effort, teamwork, and deep reflection to uncover. The journey will not only test their physical abilities but will also encourage collaboration and introspection as they answer one big life question tied to each key, helping them grow emotionally and mentally.

To unlock each key, the children will need to earn activities money through successful completion of tasks and activities. They will also earn teamwork tokens by demonstrating collaboration and helping each other along the way. These resources will be used to unlock new challenges, reveal hidden locations of the keys, and earn special privileges on the journey.

Day 1 – The Key of Connection

Big Question: *Can I really connect with others and God?*

Value: Connection & Cohesion

Skill: Building relationships

We all long to connect — with God, with others, and with who we are.

*Objective: To foster **connection** and **cohesion** among children by helping them build meaningful relationships with their peers and with God. Through teamwork and collaboration, children will develop essential skills like **building relationships**, **communication**, and **problem-solving**, while exploring the value of connection in different contexts.*

Day 2 – The Key of Authenticity

Big Question: *Can I truly be myself?*

Value: Authenticity & Diversity

Skill: Self-awareness, Vulnerability

When I show my real self, I can discover what love and care truly mean.

Objective: Learn to embrace and express our true selves, recognize the value of diversity, and build self-awareness in both personal and team contexts.

Day 3 – The key of belonging

Big Question: *Do I truly belong somewhere?*

Value: Belonging & Inclusion

Skill: Empathy

Even when we feel rejected or invisible, we are never truly alone.

Objective: To help children understand the importance of belonging and inclusion, and to foster empathy by encouraging them to collaborate, support each other, and recognize their unique contributions within a community.

Day 4 – The key of resilience

Big Question: *How do I overcome challenges and doubts?*

Value: Resilience

Skill: Problem-solving

Even when relationships break, they can be healed with God's help, forgiveness, and effort.

Objective: To help children develop resilience and problem-solving skills by teaching them how to overcome challenges, restore broken relationships, and persevere in difficult situations, emphasizing the importance of effort, forgiveness, and healing.

Day 5 – The key of purpose

Big Question: *What is my purpose in life?*

Value: Purpose & Hope

Skill: Goal-setting

We are all called to something meaningful. Our story matters.

Objective: To inspire children to reflect on their purpose in life, set meaningful goals, and understand the importance of building strong, lasting relationships.

Sample Schedule

Day 1

10:30-12:30 - Welcome + Accommodation + Icebreaker Games

12:30-13:30 - Lunch

13:30-14:00 - Preparation for Activities / Group Division

14:00-17:40 - Main Activities

17:40-18:00 - Snack

18:00-19:00 - Free Choice Activities

19:00-19:45 - Dinner

20:00-20:30 - Closing of daily quest

20:15-21:30 - Evening Activity

Middle Days

8:15-8:45 - Breakfast

8:45-9:15 – Questions box in small groups

9:15-9:30 Opening of the daily quest

9:30-12:45 - Main Activities

13:00-14:30 - Lunch and Break

14:30-17:00 - Main Activities

17:00-17:30 - Snack

17:30-19:00 - Free Choice Activities & Talent show preparation

19:00-19:45 - Dinner

20:00-20:30 - Closing of daily quest

20:15-21:30 - Evening Activity

Last Day

8:15-8:45 - Breakfast

8:45-9:15 – Questions box in small groups

9:15-9:30 - Opening of the daily quest

9:30-13:30 - Main Activities

13:30-14:15 - Lunch

14:15-14:30 - Preparation

14:30-15:00 - Closing Ceremony



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