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Campfire Memories

It is officially the time of year that kids are starting to count down the school days left, baseball fields are getting busier, and families are spending time outside! This is one of my favorite times of year because it is not too hot out yet, and there is some excitement in the air thinking about all that summer brings. Some of my favorite memories are about this time of year around a campfire. I grew up in a small town and my house became the night for campfires, my friends and neighbors would gather around and we would have the best time telling stories and making memories. There are a few things I learned around a campfire that have stuck with me today. First, I learned the importance of campfire safety. When I was in high school, my parents trusted me and my friends to take care of the fire, of course after giving us a lesson on safety. You should always have water nearby that is easily accessible. My family had a table with a firepit in the middle and it was great because it held the fire off the ground and kept it contained. If you do not have a table like this, use some type of fire pit, just make sure it is safe before lighting. Make sure you know the type of wood you are using for the fire, you should use untreated wood.

Second, I learned that all ages have a great time around the campfire. My parents, my friends, my friends' younger siblings, and my neighbors a few houses down were the people that often gathered around our campfire. We always had a great time and I learned many lessons listening to the older generations that gathered with us. I think that sitting around a campfire is like sitting down as a family to eat dinner. It is a time for people to unwind and it has a bonus of connecting with nature since you are outdoors.

Last, I learned some of the BEST snacks to make over a fire. Of course, the s'mores is at the top of the list of, but the variations you can make with s'mores is endless! Over the years we replaced the chocolate bars with Reese's cups or Nutella. Reese's has become a new favorite of mine. Another way to change it up is to replace the graham crackers with cookies, rice crispies, Oreos! Another snack we often roasted were Starbursts, we would put one starburst on a roasting stick and cooked it just enough to start melting. Then, give it a few seconds to cool a little bit, and eat it warm! My sister and I both learned the hard way that making snacks requires safety as well. Marshmallows are hot when you are roasting them over the fire so be careful with them when cooking. My sister accidentally flipped her roasting stick up and her marshmallow hit her face. Unfortunately, the marshmallow was hot, so it was painful, but luckily, it was on her cheek and not

in her eyes. Another time, I dropped a hot Starburst on my leg, although not as painful, I have a small scar from the burn to remind myself that anytime you are around a campfire, safety is important, so keep your hot snacks away from your bodies when cooking.

Overall, campfire safety is important to have a great time! I hope you have time to enjoy some snacks over a fire this summer with family and friends and make memories as I did growing up.

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