

## Camp KIA KAHA 2011

Yes! The day had finally arrived! Fifteen of us gathered at the Kiwi International Hotel in Auckland, where the out of towners had stayed the previous night. We all waited patiently and as the bus arrived the children piled on, feeling excited about what was in store for us at Camp.

Once we arrived the children picked out their beds and then eagerly waited for their next instruction. The camp manager came over and gave us the rules and then we were off to explore the camp grounds before lunch. It was a beautiful day so after lunch the children were ready to get on the water slide and have some fun!!!



The activities at camp were great, each child had the opportunity and were encouraged to take part in all the activities which included Kayaking, flying fox, water slide, confidence course, archery, trolleys and much more.

Delwyn Breslau the founder of the Burn Support Group and her husband Alan, a burn survivor himself, came out Saturday afternoon and stayed the night with us.

After dinner Alan introduced the "Talking Stick". It gave the kids the opportunity to share their feelings and experiences by passing the stick around the group and using it as a talking post. A few of the children spoke which was really brave of them and the parents gave it a go as well, with a few tears shed.



That night we made smores with biscuits and toasted marshmallows and sat around a bonfire and played Chinese whispers. With a group of imaginative children the story's that came out in the end were never the same which made everyone roar with laughter.

Camp was drawing to an end which left everyone a little sad. As Sunday morning rolled around, we all cleaned up our cabins and packed our bags. We then went off to try our luck on the trolleys, which were steered by ropes and had no brakes! Nail biting to say the least! Every time a child came around that corner, with a smile ear to ear, heading straight towards you at top speed was sacry stuff!

Lunch was put on so that the parents and friends of burn support could join us. Our adult burn survivors, Heather, Cameron, Erik and Melissa spoke about their experience and how they coped as kids. Incredibly inspiring words that left the kids feeling empowered and encouraged.

It was the perfect end to an amazing weekend and it left me feeling so privileged to be a part of it.

Camp mamma will miss everyone and can't wait for 2012.

