

The Survival Trip

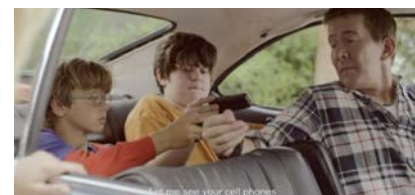
The Survival Trip (TV2, Copenhagen, Denmark) is a 25-minute, live-action drama for children ages 7 to 9. This is the first episode in the series "Weekend Dad." The program opens with Sune, a boy operating a Rube Goldberg machine in his bedroom. His mother calls and it is time to go with his estranged father Torben on a weekend camping trip. Sune's friend Hans joins them and the boys must leave their cell phones behind (cf. illustration 1). They drive off, crossing a large bridge and stopping at a Swedish restaurant for lunch. Torben flirts with the server, uses curse language, and makes fun of Hans. Sune sees a notice about dangerous bank robber Hasse Halleström, who is being sought by police (cf. illustration 2). Back in the car, Torben turns his head to speak to Sune and accidentally hits a deer. They get out of the car and see that the deer is on the ground but still breathing (cf. illustration 3). A truck drives up and a hunter gets out. He approaches and prepares to shoot the deer with his rifle (cf. illustration 4). Torben takes the gun, but Sune stops him from shooting just in time for the deer to get up and run away. Back in the car, they all laugh at first; but Sune poses serious questions to Torben to account for his irresponsible actions. In the forest Torben teaches the boys an old trick and hurts Sune (cf. illustration 5). Torben tries to bond with Sune, but instead Torben says and does things to aggravate him and they argue. At the campfire that night, Sune and Hans compare their relationships to their fathers, while Torben overhears them. Then Torben uses his lighter and explodes the tent with their gear in it. Torben discovers his cell phone with GPS is ruined. He climbs a tree to survey the directions, but falls and injures his leg. They end up walking in circles and the boys hit their limit. Sune argues with his dad again and runs away by himself. Torben and Hans search for him. They see a cabin and discover a large sum of money there. It is the bank robber's hide out and he ties them up (cf. illustration 6). Sune distracts the robber using the old trick Torben showed him. The father and son are reunited (cf. illustration 7). Torben picks up the boys later. On the roof of his car is a hot air balloon basket he bought with reward money and he promises to take them in it (cf. illustration 8).

The Survival Trip placed fourth in the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014 in the 7-11 fiction category.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS' OPINION

International experts shared their opinions about *The Survival Trip* during the discussion sessions at the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014. According to the experts, this depiction was one of the best examples of bad fathers. Experts acknowledged the challenges that children face when fathers are non-existent or there are family divisions. Instead of portraying a good father, according to a female expert from the **Netherlands**, this negative portrayal creates sympathy with the character. A female expert from **Germany** sees this program as an important way to show relationships between fathers and children and to show how children can empower themselves to turn things around. A female expert from **Chile** appreciates the emotional guidance supplied by the boy in dealing with a parent who is far from perfect. The search for connection is an important element, according to a female expert from **Slovenia**.

Numerous experts commented about the very good acting. Many also described this program as being funny and entertaining. There was concern about the violence, with guns and kicking. Additional comments are provided below.



Ill. 1: Sune and Hans prepare for a camping trip with Torben



Ill. 2: Sune sees a notice about a dangerous criminal

Screenshots from *The Survival Trip* © TV2



Ill. 3: Torben accidentally hits a deer with the car



Ill. 4: A hunter prepares to shoot the injured deer



Ill. 5: Torben teaches the boys an old trick

Screenshots from *The Survival Trip* © TV2

“There’s no story if everything’s fine.” (female expert, United Kingdom)

“I like this film because I think it pushes all the buttons....This is definitely a Prix Jeunesse piece, something we should all show at our offices and debate ‘why didn’t we produce this’ or ‘how do we produce something like this.’” (male expert, Netherlands)

“It is really fresh to make the father character that extreme.” (male expert, Norway)

“I felt for the father in *The Survival Trip*. It showed his vulnerability versus the normally vilified ‘Bad Dad.’” (female expert, Canada)

“It’s the transformation of both, to find a meeting point of personalities and pending issues – it was very universal and interesting to me.” (female expert, Argentina)



Ill. 6: Sune and Torben defeat the bank robber



Ill. 7: Torben and Sune are reunited as father and son



Ill. 8: Torben takes the boys out for pizza and a movie

“It was brave. It was surprising. It was made from a boy’s perspective. Within one and a half minutes, you knew who the characters were and what the problem was.” (female expert, Germany)

“I thought the boys’ reaction to dad embarrassing them all felt real. Even though the dad was a typical TV dad, the kids’ reactions were real.” (female expert, Australia)

“It was also the best production moment I’ve seen in a film when the dad is hanging there and he tells the kid to kick himself.” (male expert, United States)

“I feel guilty about being so entertained by *The Survival Trip*, but the problems were solved by violence. It’s a shame that the child couldn’t use the qualities we knew him to have, such as science, as he is an inventor.” (male expert, United Kingdom)

Elizabeth Spezia, PhD student, Southern Illinois University, USA

Target Audience 8.20	Idea 7.63	Script 7.61	Realization 8.07
Average Score per Category by experts’ voters at PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2014			