

CAMP GESHER PARENT MANUAL 2021



WELCOME TO CAMP GESHER

We are so excited to be heading back to Lake Pringle for our 58th summer season. We have been busy planning all year to ensure that this coming season is another fabulous one – a summer of fun and growth that Camp Gesher is known for. We, of course, have been working to ensure that our community remains healthy and safe.

For those of you who are already a part of our incredible camp family, you are about to embark on another amazing summer experience. For those of you who are new, we want to especially welcome you to the Camp Gesher family.

Thank you for being our partner in this experience for your child. Now it's time to prepare for camp. This handbook is designed to help you get ready for the experience ahead. We hope that you will read it carefully and keep it handy as you prepare for camp.

We have divided the manual into seven sections:

1. About Camp Gesher
2. Packing for Camp
3. Communication
4. Health and Safety
5. Transportation
6. Important Dates
7. Helpful Tips for First Time Families

There will be an additional COVID supplement to this guide as we firm up summer plans. The update will address testing, transportation, COVID waivers and all protocols for the summer. We are waiting on the specific guidance from the Government of Ontario before releasing this information. Camp Gesher's COVID protocols will meet or exceed the standards of the Ontario Camps Association and the Government of Ontario.

We look forward to connecting with you, and enjoying wonderful and sunny summer ahead!

Shoshi

Shoshi Lipschultz
Director

Matthew

Matthew Jadd
Assistant Director

Micah, Molly and Maya

Micah, Molly and Maya
Mazkirut 2021

ABOUT MACHANEH (CAMP) GESHER

Camp Gesher provides a high-quality Jewish camping experience to the children of Canadian, Israeli and other International Jewish communities that enriches and enhances their lives intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually in a safe and friendly communal environment. Camp Gesher seeks to fulfill its mission through a commitment to:

Youth Leadership: From our first time *chanichimot* (campers), to our *Mazkirut* (senior leadership), the youth lead the way. *Tzevet* (staff members) create the atmosphere where every *chanichol* (camper) is part of the running of camp, be it through their work leading our daily flag raising, leading singing, running a program for the whole camp, or managing the money in their collective fund. “Running camp” gives the individual campers a sense of confidence, belonging, ownership, and leadership skills.

Israel: We create a connection to and responsibility for the State of Israel and the Jewish People. Camp Gesher is a place where all political viewpoints are respected and valued; we provide an open and safe place to talk about Israel and continually work to shape our own relationships with Israel. We connect to Israel through Hebrew language, *Rikkud* (Israeli dance), the presence of *Shinshinimot* and *Shlichimot* (Israeli Emissaries), visits from Israeli *chanichimot* (campers), who are fully integrated into cabins with Canadian campers, as well as trips to Israel for our older *chanichimot*(campers).

Judaism: Camp Gesher cultivates a cultural Jewish identity, creating a connection with Jewish peoplehood. We offer an open, inviting community for individuals of all backgrounds, ideologies, and observances of Judaism. Our weeks culminate with *Shabbat* and *Havdallah*.

Personal Development: Our *chanichimot* (campers) develop both tangible and intangible skills at camp. They build self-confidence through trying new activities, gain resiliency by enduring setbacks in a supportive environment, develop life-long friendships, experience unstructured play, build social skills and understanding of group dynamics, unplug from technology and connect with nature.

Community: Camp Gesher is a place where ALL people are welcomed, valued, and respected. We are inclusive of all families including interfaith families, gender identities, sexual orientations, political opinions, and Jewish expressions. We create our camp community in unique ways including *Kupa* (Communal Fund) empowering campers to share resources and make group decisions. *Avodah* (work) each morning, *Tzevet* (staff) and *Chanichimot* (campers) engage in a short project of their choice. Working together is one way that Gesher creates a lasting community.

THE STRUCTURE OF MACHANEH GESHER

Camp Gesher divides the *chanichimot* (campers) by different age groups. The ages are based on grade.

The youngest age group is ***Ofarimot*** for campers who have just finished Grades 1-3. Next are ***Amelimot, Chalutzimot, Solelimot, Chotrimot, Bonimot*** and ***Bogrimot***, for campers about to enter Grade 10. The ***Bogrimot*** program is aimed at developing leadership skills and includes more in-depth educational programs.

The following summer campers entering Grade 11 have the opportunity to travel in **Israel** while participating in **MBI (Machaneh Bonim B'Israel)**. MBI is a program sponsored by Habonim Dror North America for participants from all the North American *machanot* (camps). Participants experience different aspects of the country including spending time on a kibbutz, hiking, touring cities old and new, and learning about Israeli history, society, culture and politics.

For Summer 2021, Camp Gesher has decided to offer a local, camp-based Grade 10 program. This program will feature some traditions that this group missed in their *Bogrim* Year, connect with other grade 10 campers from the other Habonim Dror camps, and expand their leadership skills. Campers will have the opportunity to earn high school volunteer hours (required in Ontario) this summer.

Madatz is the last phase in leadership training for Camp Gesher. In Hebrew, ***Madatz*** is the acronym for *Madrichimot Derech Tzevet*, or staff in training. Within this framework, *Madatz* participants experience what it is like to work with and lead activities for campers. They learn to work together as a team and grow as a *kvutza* (group). *Madatz* “graduate” the summer prepared for future work as counselors at Camp Gesher.



A “TYPICAL DAY” AT MACHANEH GESHER

8:00	Kima (wake-up)
8:45	Mifkad (raising the flags)
9:00	Aruchat Boker (breakfast)
9:30	Avodah
10:00	Peula Aleph (first activity)
11:00	Peula Bet (second activity)
12:10	Aruchat Tzohorayim (lunch) Shira (sing-a-long)
12:45	Shira/Rikkud (Singing and Dancing)
1:20	Menucha (Rest time)
2:20	Schiya Klalit (general swim)
3:20	Kibud (Snack) Nikayon (cabin clean-up)
4:00	Peula Gimel (third activity)
5:00	Peula Daled (fourth activity)
6:15	Mifkad (lowering the flags)
6:30	Aruchat Erev (dinner)
7:15	Chofesh (Free time)
8:00	Tochnit Erev (evening program)
9:00	Bedtime Kibud (Snack)
9:30	Starting bedtimes, getting later by age

*Although this is a “typical” day, we of course have various other programs, including *Yom Meyuchad* (special/theme days); Overnight *Tiyulim* (canoe trips); and many other special events throughout the summer.

HEBREW WORDS USED AT CAMP

Hebrew is an important part of our camp culture, so we try to use it in as much as possible in our everyday interactions.

Hebrew is a gendered language. As a progressive and inclusive community, it is important to us to create and utilize inclusive Hebrew as well as inclusive English pronouns (they/their or ze/zer). We have modified Hebrew to be inclusive; for example, a camper is a *chanich* (m), *chanicha* (f), or a *chanichol* (non-binary). For plurals, we use both the masculine ending (im) and the feminine ending (ot) together: campers = *chanichimot*.

Here are some words that are used regularly at camp.

GROUPS (*Kvutstot*) (Grades listed are the grade completed in 2020)

Ofarimot - fawns (Grades 2 & 3)

Chalutzimot - pioneers (Grade 5)

Chotrimot - rowers (Grade 7)

Bogrimot - graduates (Grade 9)

_____ - To be determined (campers who have finished Grade 10)

Madatz – Madrichimot Derech Tzevet – leaders in training (finishing grade 11)

Amelimot - workers (Grade 4)

Solelimot - pavers (Grade 6)

Bonimot - builders (Grade 8)

TITLES

chanichol – camper

madrichol – counselor

Chinuch - educational coordinator

Rosh Machaneh - head counselor

chanichimot - campers

madrichimot – counselors

Melavol – child care coordinator

Shlichol - emissary (from Israel)

EVENTS

mifkad – assembly

avoda – work

boker – morning

erev – evening

kima - wake-up

hoda'a – announcement

ashpa – garbage

pe'ula - activity

arucha - meal

tzohorayim - afternoon

layla - night

tochnit – program

medurah - campfire

michzur - recycling

PLACES

tzrif – cabin

chadar ochel - dining hall

moadon - meeting place

misrad – office

mitbach - kitchen

mirpa'ah – health center

beit tarbut - recreation/culture hall

hof – beach

agam – lake

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

KUPA

There is no Tuck Shop or store at Camp Gesher. Based on the Habonim Dror ideology of communal living, all food articles that are brought or sent from home are placed in *kupa* to be shared equally with all group members. All food products that are sent up to camp must be **KOSHER** and **NUT FREE**. The snacks from *kupa* are not kept in the cabin, and will be accessed and distributed for special events.

Food items that are brought to camp for medical reasons are NOT considered *kupa* and will not be shared.

Each camper also brings a suggested amount of money at the start of each session. Each age group pools its allowance, creates a budget and decides what to do with the group fund. Often the group decides to go on a day trip or bring in food for a special occasion. On the basis of past years, we suggest that **\$40-\$50 per person, per session** is sufficient for *kupa*.

For Summer 2021, due to COVID, we have options to “bring in” *kupa* programs. This could be a day of inflatable bouncy castles, a nerf obstacle course, or something of that nature.

CANOE TRIPS & OVERNIGHT CAMPING

Tiyul - Overnight and Adventure Programs are part of our Adventure program at Camp, each of our campers will have the opportunity to participate in a different outdoor experience. Our *Ofarimot* campers participate in a “outdoor adventure” where they have a cookout/bonfire, enjoy a campfire and stories and then return to their cabin to sleep. All other campers participate in a one night overnight where they canoe or hike, enjoy a cookout dinner, camp out in tents for the night, and return to camp the following day. For many, this experience is their first time sleeping in a tent and experiencing an outdoor overnight. Our staff focus on teaching basic outdoor skills and helping campers to develop a love of outdoor living! For our *Bogrimot* campers we offer a 2 night canoe trip. Campers spend their days canoeing and canoeing, portaging throughout the park with our trained and experienced staff.

Our outdoor tripping program may be revised for Summer 2021 based on COVID-19 restrictions.

PACKING FOR CAMP

BAGGAGE

We ask that campers pack **no more than** two (2) duffel bags that fully collapse and a sleeping bag. **ABSOLUTELY NO TRUNKS WILL BE TAKEN UP TO CAMP!**

Please make sure that all of your child(ren)'s bags are labeled (either written directly on the bags or with luggage tags) with your child's name and age group.

LABELS

Every article of clothing, bedding, footwear, and equipment must be labeled. Care should be taken to see that labels are wash-proof and securely attached. Please remember to clearly label all items with your child's full name. LABELING WILL HELP TO ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILD WILL RETURN HOME WITH HIS/HER BELONGINGS

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Camp clothing should be simple. We recommend that fancy outfits and expensive clothing that require dry cleaning be left at home.

Other Items that are NOT allowed in Camp include:

- Alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes), or paraphernalia
- Items of sentimental value, expensive clothing, or anything that might get lost or stolen
- Hotpots, kettles, sandwich makers, or any butane or gas, or electric appliances
- Animals of any kind
- Candles, incense, matches, lighters, or fireworks
- Knives of any kind
- Electronic devices: Cellular telephones, laptops, tablets, Walkie-Talkies, PlayStation, Nintendo, DS etc. Our Electronics policy is clearly outlined in our Electronics Policy. Cellular telephones, tablets, and similar devices are strictly forbidden in camp. They will be confiscated and returned at the end of the camper's session.

We are in the business of building community and thus we encourage conversation, group discussions, and team building activities. We limit the use of personal music devices to quiet times in the cabin, particularly in the evenings.

LOST ITEMS

Camp Gesher cannot assume any responsibility for any items brought to camp. Please mark all clothing and personal belongings with your child's name, especially if they are valuable to you. **Expensive items tend to get damaged or lost. Please do not bring them.**

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

The following list is a general guide based on a 10-day supply. Washing is done weekly.

Linens

1 sleeping bag (essential)
2 blankets
2 sets of sheets (twin size - essential)

1 pillow
2 pillowcases
4 towels (2 beach/2 bath)

Clothing

2 pajamas
10 T-shirts
5 pair pants
6 pair shorts
3 sweatshirts or warm sweaters
10 pair socks
10 underwear
2 bathing suits
1 "nice" outfit for Shabbat/Banquet night

1 jacket
1 raincoat or rain poncho
1 pair of rain boots
1 pair running shoes
1 pair sandals
1 pair flip flops
1 pair water shoes with back strap
2 sun hats (imperative)

Toiletries and other items

laundry bag
bag for toiletries
shampoo and soap
toothbrush and toothpaste
comb and/or brush
plenty of sunscreen
flashlight

insect repellant
canteen or reusable water bottle
small 'tripping food kit'
stationery, stamps, pens/pencils
*musical instruments
*small sports equipment (e.g., baseball glove)
*board games, books, playing cards

**These items are optional and can be helpful for quiet times.



COMMUNICATION

We are partners in your child's summer experience, and it is important that you know how to connect with us and in turn, we are able to keep in touch with you. As such, we have developed a communication strategy that we believe ensures a child's positive camp experience and that you have a good sense of what is happening at camp. You can be assured that Camp is only a phone call away at any given time.

In order to allow for the best possible adjustment for your child, we ask that you do not call the camp with the expectation of speaking with them. If there is a problem, please be assured that we will call you. **It is our experience that phone calls home do not help children who are having difficulty adjusting to camp life. Please do not tell your children that they may call you if they want to go home or if they are homesick.** Instead, encourage them to discuss their problems or concerns with their counselors or our senior staff.

Campers may call home on their own birthday. Birthday calls are generally made in the evening after dinner. If you would like to arrange a specific time for your child to make their birthday call, please contact our office and we will make the arrangements.

STANDARD COMMUNICATION DURING THE SUMMER

During the summer you can expect consistent communication from Camp Gesher.

1. Staff will call and introduce themselves a few days before camp.
2. Pictures will be posted on the website 6 days a week (not on Shabbat)
3. Daily Facebook and Instagram posts
4. Weekly email update

At Camp Gesher, our internet can sometimes be a challenge. If we are not able to upload pictures on a given day, we will post an update on social media.

MAIL DURING THE SUMMER

Receiving letters at camp is important to campers. Families are encouraged to write letters to their children on a regular basis and to send a letter or 2 before your child even leaves for camp. This way they can have mail on arrival.

You may also send care packages. Please do not send expensive or prohibited items. Also, please note that in the spirit of community *kupa*, any snacks sent must be kosher, nut free, and shared with the group.

You can also email your camper. Emails will be printed and delivered daily (except Shabbat). Unfortunately, campers can not email you back. We appreciate your understanding. We will not print emails longer than one full page and/or attachments.

We encourage campers to write home regularly. Be sure to send sufficient postage, paper, etc. with your child(ren). Pre-addressed envelopes are often helpful for younger children.

In our experience **the first letter home** sometimes includes the first few day's difficulties and adaptations to your camper's new surroundings. Generally, by the time this letter arrives home, most issues have been resolved.

IMPORTANT EMAILS

Shoshana Lipschultz, Director

shoshi@campgesher.com

Matthew Jadd, Assistant Director

matthew.jadd@campgesher.com

Mazkirut 2021

mazkirut@campgesher.com

SUMMER MAILING ADDRESS

Name of Child (Group Name)

Camp Gesher

General Delivery

Cloyne, ON K0H 1K0

Email campers@campgesher.com

GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Year-round Office (Toronto):

272 Codsell Avenue

Toronto, Ontario M3H 3X2

Phone: (416) 633-2511

Summer Office:

274A Addington Road #4

Cloyne, ON K0H 1K0

Phone: (613) 336-2583

HEALTH & SAFETY

The health and welfare of our community is our foremost concern. The health and well-being of our campers and staff is our highest priority. Our professional and summer staff spends considerable time developing protocol to maintain the safety of our camp community and creating effective planning for responding to any type of crisis.

Camp Gesher complies with all Provincial and Municipal codes of health, the Ontario Camps Association standards, and other regulations governing children's camps. Fire exiting safety plans and all other emergency procedures are practiced regularly, and fire safety rules are strictly enforced.

Medical Forms

Concern for the health and safety of our entire camp population is at the forefront of everything we do. You can certainly appreciate that the care and consideration of a community the size of ours is no easy task! In order to run a safe, efficient, comprehensive health center at camp, it is necessary for our entire community to adhere to certain policies and procedures. It is vital that parents/guardians of minors and adult staff members provide the camp medical staff with a complete, accurate, and up-to-date medical history. Rest assured that this information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

Camper and staff will NOT be allowed to get on the bus to Camp without a completed Health History form, Medical exam form, Immunization History, and Medical Authorization. All of these forms can be found in the Forms and Downloads section of your account. While we recognize the time involved in completing these forms each year, it is vital that our records are up to date and we therefore require new forms annually.

Medical Services Our Camp Nurses are always on call when camp is in session. The camp *mirpa'ah* (health center) provides a comfortable atmosphere for campers and is fully equipped with overnight facilities, should the need arise.

Medication

Medications (prescription and non-prescription, including vitamins, aspirin, Tylenol, etc...) may not be kept in campers' possession at any time. All medications of any type must be clearly labeled with your child's name, the Physician's name, the name of the medication, and the required dosage, and given to the camp nurse on departure day. The nurse will dispense all necessary medications as ordered by your child's physician. EpiPen and inhalers must be kept with campers at all times.

The infirmary is stocked with medications for common ailments. Medications that accompany your child must be listed on the health form, signed by a parent or legal guardian,

and given to the nurse. Our policy is not to give any child drugs or medication unless prescribed by a licensed physician.

Blister Packaging

In order to offer a safer and more simplified way of distributing medications in camp, we require all daily prescription medications that are in pill, capsule, or caplet form to be pre-packaged in "Bubble Packs" or "Blister Packs" by your local pharmacy, in advance of arrival in camp. Any child arriving at camp without their medication properly bubble-packed will have their medication bubble packed for them at a cost to the family. We thank you in advance for your compliance to this important policy.

Medic-Alert Bracelet

Children who react to specific antibiotics or medications, or who have specific medical challenges or allergies, should wear a Medic-Alert bracelet, which can be obtained through the Medic-Alert foundation in your city. If your child falls into this category and does not already have one, please arrange for one prior to camp.

Dentist / Orthodontist

A pre-summer visit to the dentist and/or orthodontist is a wise move to avoid potential problems during the summer. Should a problem arise we will contact you and do our best to find a dental provider near Camp for your child. You will be billed for any expenses incurred.

Glasses/Contact Lenses

Children who wear glasses or contact lenses should bring an extra pair to camp, in case of breakage or loss. Please be sure to clearly label all frames and contact lens cases.

Lice

Head lice are tiny insects which live on the scalp. Lice are becoming more prevalent in North America. They do not pose a health threat; they are, however, a nuisance. **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO CAMP WITH LICE.** Please contact our office if lice are detected on your child's scalp prior to camp.

We will be providing a compulsory lice check as the campers arrive to camp. If your child is found to be infected, the camp will do its best to treat your child to the best of its ability. Should your child need lice treatment while at camp, services will be administered by a professional and families will be charged \$100.00 for the lice treatment.

Ticks

Given the growing concerns about ticks in Ontario and beyond, we are in regular communication with our local public health officials about ticks in the area. Our staff are properly trained on our tick protocol including learning about what a tick bite might look like and are instructed to direct any suspicious bites or rashes to the infirmary for medical inspection. Campers are trained by their staff about potential tick bites including how to

perform body checks paying special attention to their groin, scalp, underarms and back. Campers are not permitted to be in areas where grass is not cut regularly. If a camp activity takes place in an area with taller grass, long pants or socks must be worn.

Out-of-Camp Medical Treatment

Camp Geshar has established a policy requiring parents to assume all costs for out-of-camp medical treatments and/or expenses that are not covered by OHIP (applicable to Ontario residents). At the end of camp, any costs related to prescription drugs and out-of-camp medical treatment (lab tests, crutches, X-rays, lice treatment etc.) will be billed to camper families. The original receipts will be included with the invoice for submission to your supplementary medical plan.

A section of the Medical Form asks that you allow the Camp Director and medical staff at camp to secure proper treatment for your child. The Medical Form **MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT** in order for any child to be accepted into the camp program (your electronic signature is valid and binding). It is important that you include a legible photocopy of your child's OHIP card (Ontario campers). Please be assured that we will make every effort to reach you in the event of any medical concern or emergency.



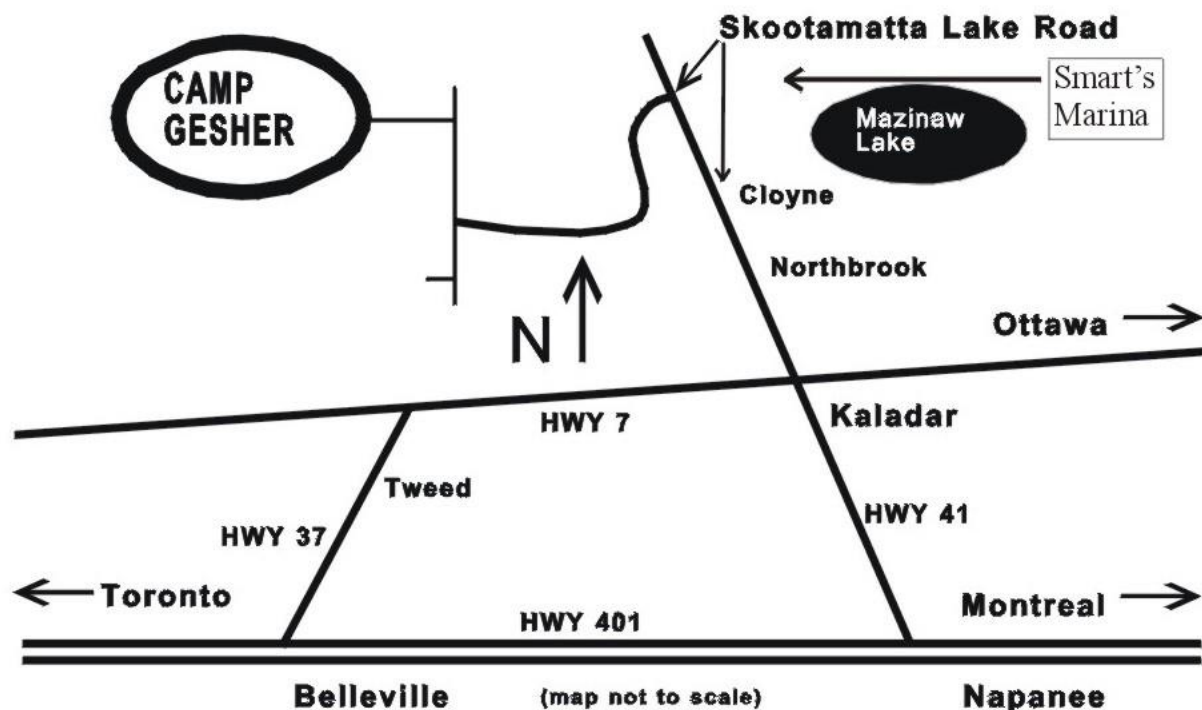
TRANSPORTATION

From **Toronto**: Hwy 401 East to Belleville; Hwy 37 North to Hwy 7, then East to Kaladar; (approx. 3 hrs.) Hwy 41 North to Cloyne; pass Cloyne, turn left at **the second** Skootamatta Lake Road sign (after Smart's Marina). Make a right on Addington Rd. #4 (the first street) and follow signs to the camp.

From **Hamilton**: Follow same route as Toronto.
(approx. 4 hrs.)

From **Ottawa**: Hwy 7 West to Kaladar; Hwy 41 North to Cloyne; pass Cloyne, turn left at (approx. 2 hrs.) **the second** Skootamatta Lake Road sign. Make a right on Addington Rd. #4 (the first street) and follow signs to camp.

From **Montreal**: Hwy 20 West; changes to 401 in Ontario; follow 401 to Napanee; Hwy 41 (approx. 3½ hrs.) North through Kaladar, to Cloyne; pass Cloyne, turn left at **the second** Skootamata Lake Rd. sign. Make a right on Addington Rd. #4 (the first street) and follow signs to camp.



IMPORTANT DATES

June 1	Payment and Forms must be completed	
July 2	Madatz Arrive at Camp	
July 4	First Session Campers Arrive	
July 11	Ofarim Starter Aleph Departs	Parents pick up
July 18	Two Week Session Aleph Departs	Parents pick up
July 30	End of First Session	
July 30 - August 1	Intersession	
August 1	Second Session Campers Arrive	Parents pick up
August 8	Ofarim Starter Aleph Leaves	Parents pick up
August 15	Two Week Session Gimmel Leaves	
August 22	End of Second Session	
September	End of Summer BBQ at Earl Bales	Specific Date TBD



HELPFUL TIPS FOR FIRST TIME CAMPERS

A child's first summer at camp is an exciting and overwhelming experience (for campers and for parents). Our staff are trained on how to deal with the specific needs of first-time campers. If you have any concerns about your child's adjustment to camp, please be in touch with us before the summer. We do our best to ensure a successful experience for all, and the more information we have from you, the better we can support your child.

A few helpful hints...

1. Teach your child how to make a bed. This is an important part of the daily routine and will be helpful when campers first arrive at camp.
2. Have your child practice organizing clothing and other personal belongings. Neatness and organizational skills count when children live in group situations.
3. Talk to your child about camp and discuss any concerns they may have about their new camping experience. Feel free to contact the camp office prior to camp to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's adjustment to camp.
4. Your child is probably most anxious about the unexpected. Talk through these concerns and try to answer all their questions. Visit our website together to learn more about what to expect in a day, our menu, etc.
5. Be sure your child knows who will be taking care of them – experienced counselors who want to make this summer the best for every camper. Encourage them to ask questions and seek help from the staff when needed.
6. You may also be nervous about your child's camp experience, please stay positive and encouraging, letting them know how proud you are of them to be taking this important step. Your child should know that you are going to miss them, but not your feelings of anxiety and fear of letting them go.
7. Involve your child with packing for camp. They will love labeling their items, and when they help pack, they know what they are bringing and how to find things when they unpack at camp.
8. Pre-addressed, stamped envelopes and postcards will help ensure that you and others receive mail from your camper.
9. Please do not tell campers that they can call home, or that you will come pick them up. Allowing our staff to do what they do best will give your child the best chance for success. A few days of homesickness is normal, we need a bit of time to help them adjust.
10. Join us at our New Family Orientation in early June to find out more details about camp and meet camp staff and other new campers.