

**SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION PACKET**  
**Timbercrest 55<sup>th</sup> Celebration Event**  
**Summer 2022**



**girl scouts**  
of western new york



# CAMP INFORMATION PACKET

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# **FAMILY EVENT AT CAMP TIMBERCREST**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our camp mission is: To build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

## **GOALS OF CAMP**

The goals and objectives at camp are:

- At Girl Scout camp we will provide opportunities for campers to develop and improve on their leadership skills.
- At Girl Scout camp we will nurture and develop campers' personal accomplishments and responsibilities.
- At Girl Scout camp we will educate campers on the importance of acceptance and tolerance

## **OUTCOMES OF CAMP**

The outcomes at camp are to:

- Girls will be able to list two to three activities (they participated in) that gave them an increased belief in their leadership abilities
- While at camp girls will have tried two to three new activities and improved on an existing skill.
- Girls will be able to recognize and communicate at least two ways to be a sister to every Girl Scout

## **AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION: FUN AND SAFETY – ACA CAMPS SET THE STANDARD**

What does it mean to be an accredited camp?

ACA Accreditation means that our camps submitted to a thorough (up to 300 standards) review of its operation — from staff qualifications and training to emergency management. American Camp Association® collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to assure that current practices at the camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation.

GSWNY and ACA form a partnership that promotes summers of growth and fun in an environment committed to safety.

ACA helps all accredited camps provide:

- Healthy, developmentally appropriate activities and learning experiences
- Discovery through experiential education
- Caring, competent role models
- Service to the community and the environment
- Opportunities for leadership and personal growth



## COVID-19 GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Safety for our campers and staff is and always will be our number one priority. We want to assure our parents/guardians and all of our camp patrons that we will continue using our safe and effective COVID-19 safety plan which includes our robust Communicable Disease Plan. As always of our protocols will follow the guidance set forth by the NYSHD, CDC, WHO, and GSUSA.

### **We are asking families to partner with us to help prepare your troops/campers for a safe and healthy experience at camp**

#### **PRIOR TO ARRIVING AT CAMP**

**We would like troops to follow the following procedures prior to arrival at camp.**

- Please monitor your child for any signs and symptoms that are COVID-19 related.
- **Please note that your child will not be able to attend camp if she is experiencing any COVID 19 symptom (cough, fever of 100.1 or higher, fatigue, sore throat, etc.**

#### **OPENING DAY PROCEDURES**

**We would like families to follow the following procedures upon arrival to your daughter's camp session.**

- **Families will remain in their vehicles upon entering the camp parking lot.**
- All Campers/ Staff will be required to wear masks upon arrival to camp
- **You will be greeted by a camp staff member who will provide you with an informational checklist**
- Campers will have their temperatures taken by the Health Supervisor or a designated camp staff member prior to getting out of their vehicles. **Your daughter must have a temperature of 100 degrees or lower in order to remain at camp.**
- If your child's temperature is elevated, she will remain in the vehicle or will be placed in a shaded area for 10-15 minutes to allow for cooling down. At which time her temperature will be taken. **Your daughter must have a temperature of 100 degrees or lower in order to remain at camp.**
- Medication is handed to Health Supervisor. Only medication for which an electronic MD order has been submitted through Camp Doc shall be accepted. Please review **additional information on camper medication on page 12**
- Campers will be asked the required COVID -19 verbal screening questions prior to exiting their vehicles.

#### **Is your child exhibiting any of the following systems?**

##### **Group A**

Cough

Shortness of Breath

Resent Loss of Smell/Taste

##### **Group B**

Headache

Sore Throat

Fatigue

Diarrhea

Nausea

Congestion

- If a camper answers "Yes" to any 1 or more of the questions in the A group, or 2 or more of the questions from the B group, they will not be permitted to attend camp. In order to attend, campers **MUST** provide a negative COVID 19 test result. The test **MUST** be performed/dated on the day of the camper's arrival.
- Campers will be removed from their vehicles for additional health screening (head lice check and additional health screening questions) by a designated camp staff member.
- Once additional health screening is completed campers along with their luggage will be escorted to their assigned unit by a designated camp staff member/s



## DAY TO DAY OPERATION OF CAMP

- Campers and staff will be required to wear their masks while indoors. The only exception will be meals, showers and bedtime
- We are asking campers to bring at least 5 re-usable masks to camp. (Camp will have extra masks on hand for those that may need them)
- Camp buildings, sleeping areas, activity areas and activity equipment will be cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis
- Social distancing will be practiced
- Meal times in the dining hall will consist of tables spaced 6 feet apart and campers/staff will be placed at assigned tables for all meals
- Hand washing stations will be placed in designated areas throughout camp



## GENERAL INFORMATION - QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

**Camp Director Seven Hills** - Carolyn Wagner, 716-537-9421 (when camp is in session)

**Camp Director Timbercrest** – Mary Jane (MJ) Meherg, 716-358-3593 (when camp is in session)

**Director of Camp Administration** - Janet M. DePetrillo,  
(716)-935-6063 or 1-(888)-837-6410 ext. 6063 Fax: 716-706-1359

E-mail: [customercare@gswny.org](mailto:customercare@gswny.org)

### MEET THE CAMP DIRECTOR **Annette German (A.K.A – Net)**



My very first memories of camp are from when I was 4 years old camping with my family and since then my love of all things summer camp has grown! As a native of Western New York, I have had the pleasure of working at a variety of different camps for GSWNY and I am excited to return to Camp Timbercrest as the Camp Director.

I have over 20 years' experience working at camp and over 10 years' experience as a teacher. I am looking forward to hearing the girls sing their favorite songs, paddle Keyser Lake, and make more memories that will last a lifetime!

### A FIRST-RATE STAFF

- The members of our camp staff are committed to working with every camper so each has a positive camp experience.
- Camp staff members provide encouragement to girls and mentor them as they develop positive moral values, a healthy self-image, a commitment to learning, social competencies, and empowerment as well as how to use their time constructively. Girls also learn about teamwork and a healthy respect for diversity.
- Staff selection is based on a set of stringent, verifiable qualifications.
- Waterfront staff members are required to have American Red Cross Lifeguard & Water Safety Instructor Certifications.
- All staff members receive certification in First Aid and CPR before camp sessions begin.
- Specialty staff (e.g., for our horseback riding, waterfront, and the adventure challenge courses) possess required certification/training/experience prior to being hired.
- The staff attends a week-long training session that includes, but is not limited to, child development, risk management, and safety.

### PAYING FOR CAMP

**Camp Balance:** Your camp payment is due two weeks prior to the start of your daughter's camp session. Payment may be made by check, money order, or credit card (MasterCard, Visa, AMEX or Discover). Questions about your camp payment should be directed to the Camp Registrar at 1-888-837-6410.

### CAMP PAYMENT PLAN

Did you know that Camp Doc offers a payment plan? Now paying for camp can be easy and hassle free. Please refer to your camp doc registration account page and click on set up payment plan. All payments plan must be paid by August 1, 2022.

### COOKIE CREDITS CARD

Cookie Credit Cards may be used toward your camp balance by mailing it into the council office. Cookie Credits Cards cannot be used toward your camp deposit. These cards cannot be processed with online orders. They can be brought to any service center to be applied to any camp registration.

### CAMP GIFT CERTIFICATES

Camp gift certificates may be used to pay your camp balance. Purchase your camp gift certificate in any amount by utilizing this link <https://gswny.wufoo.com/forms/gswny-summer-camp-gift-certificate/>

## REFUND POLICY

No refunds will be given without three weeks prior notice of scheduled family camp event.

No refunds will be given if a family arrives for their camp event late or leaves his/her camp event early.

## REFUNDS WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS ONLY:

- The registrar is notified three (3) weeks prior to the start of the family camp session. The refund consists of camp program fees **less the \$25 non-refundable deposit**.
- The family has a health issue (supported by physician's written recommendation) that prevents them from attending camp then a full refund of the registration and camp fees will be made.

## CAMPERS THAT REQUIRE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The Girl Scouts of Western New York wants to provide a positive summer camp experience to every girl. If your child requires special accommodations (transportation, diet, food restrictions, extra supervision, other, etc.) while at camp, please contact the Director of Camp Administration **PRIOR to REGISTERING**

**YOUR CHILD** for camp at 1-888-837-6410 or [customercare@gswny.org](mailto:customercare@gswny.org) to discuss the possible accommodations that could safely and reasonably be made for your child.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Parents and guardians please note that, for safety reasons, all of our horseback riding, ropes challenge course, and water programs may be canceled when the weather conditions are unfavorable. When this occurs, alternative activities will be provided. Refunds will not be issued when programs are canceled due to weather.

## HORSEBACK RIDING:

Participants must be at least 6 years of age and be able to ride without assistance. You can sign up for horseback riding at camp. The cost is \$20 per person for an hour program payable at camp.

## SAFETY FIRST

The safety and well-being of your daughter(s) is our NUMBER ONE priority. Our camps are inspected twice a year and issued operating permits by the State of New York.

- Camp Seven Hills/Goodyear, Camp Timbercrest, and Camp Piperwood are all accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). An accredited camp must meet a nationally recognized set of standards for policies, procedures and practices related to all aspects of camp operation including program, health and safety, and staffing.
- All of our Girl Scouts of Western New York camps meet national standards set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA.
- Records and inspection reports are on file at the Depew Girl Scout office

## RABIES INFORMATION

Bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes have many things in common. They're all wild animals, and they help us by eating insects and other pests. Unfortunately, they also have one other thing in common — they all carry a disease called rabies. You can get rabies by being bitten or scratched by an animal that is infected with the disease. If this happens, you must go to the doctor so you won't get ill.

To ensure you don't get rabies, don't touch or play with any wild animals. Most wild animals are afraid of people and stay away. Many only come out at night. Sometimes animals with rabies will act sick or mean, fight with other animals, bite at trees, or even chase people. If you see wild animals that are friendly or are out during the day, stay away and tell the nearest counselor or adult.

Bats, raccoons, and foxes can also spread rabies to cows, horses, and other wild animals like skunks, woodchucks, or even deer. So remember, no matter how cute or tempting, don't touch or play with any wild animals.

## LYME DISEASE: WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne disorder in the United States and can affect the skin, joints, nervous system, heart, and eyes. It is transmitted by a tiny tick that can be as small as the size of the period at the end of this sentence.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

- Walk in the middle of trails, away from tall grass and bushes.
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt.
- Wear white or light-colored clothing to make it easier to see ticks.
- Wear a hat.
- Spray tick repellent on clothes and shoes before entering the woods.
- Wear long pants tucked into high socks.
- Wear shoes or sneakers. Don't go barefoot and avoid sandals.

## GETTING READY TO GO TO A FAMILY EVENT AT CAMP

### OPEN HOUSE AT CAMP TIMBERCREST RESIDENT CAMP

This year's Open House takes place **Sunday, June 26, 2022 from 1-3 p.m.** Tours of camp will be ongoing throughout the afternoon. While at camp you will get a firsthand look at our top-notch facilities. Spend the day meeting our qualified staff & observe Camp Timbercrest Resident Camp during its summer operation. Stop by the Tuck Shop for a look at our new summer merchandise.

Please remember when at camp, to take note that our properties consists of ravines, uneven terrain, gravel roads, streams, and hills. For your safety and the safety of others, we strongly recommend you do not wear flip-flops of any kind and only wear closed-toe shoes, take extra caution in inclement weather, as the camp paths/roads can become slippery, and inform us of any onsite transportation assistance that is required. We want you to enjoy your visit while at camp and we ask that you partner with us in assuring your safety by following these basic guidelines and instructions.

## PETS

Pets of any kind are not allowed on camp property. Parents and guardians, when you are dropping your daughter off at camp or picking her up we ask that you please leave your family pet at home. We thank you for your understanding and assistance by following this policy.

## CAMP STORES

The camp stores will be open during the family weekend event. We will have items for sale such as patches, water bottles, t-shirts, sweatshirts and stuffed animals. It is recommended that participants bring \$10 to \$20 to shop at the camp stores. Credit cards and checks will also be accepted.

## SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS

Sleeping accommodations for family and friends events will be in platform tents or cabin tents (4-5 people per tent) unless you have indicated you will be bringing your own sleeping tent, or have medical needs that require electricity (please make sure we know whether you are able to sleep on a top bunk). Please note that families that social distance together, will be placed in their own sleeping unit.



**ARCHERY** is not available for Daisy Girl Scouts.



## IMPORTANT PAPERWORK

To ensure everyone's safety, we require every person have a health form. The required adult and child health forms are available for download on our website at [gswny.org/camps](http://gswny.org/camps) (look for the camp confirmation packet link). If your daughter is attending a GSWNY summer camp program, her Camp Doc health form is acceptable and should already be on file at camp. If your daughter is not attending summer camp, please download and fill out the camper health form and bring it to camp with you.

**Please note: a physical is not required; however, any medication(s) that your daughter, you, or any other adult is taking (prescribed or over-the-counter) must be in its original container with the proper name and turned into the nurse upon registration. This is a New York State mandated health code requirement.**

## MEDICATION: DO NOT PACK MEDICATIONS IN YOUR BAGS

Here are a few things to remember about medications at camp:

- **Medication will be collected by the nurse during check-in for all adults and children.**
- All medications, both prescription and non-prescription (including vitamins), need to be stored in the infirmary and be administered by the nurse. This includes adults as well!
- **All prescription and non-prescription medications, including vitamins, must be brought to camp in the original bottle with the Rx label intact and labeled with your daughter's name.**
- Remember to pick up any leftover medication from the nurse at the end of the weekend. By law, we are required to discard any leftover medication left behind at camp.
- **Please complete the COVID-19 pre-screening health form, located on your daughter's camper profile via Camp Doc, at least on the morning of your arrival to camp.**

## PACKING FOR CAMP

### PACKING TIPS FOR OVERNIGHT CAMP

The following are tips and suggestions to make packing easy. **Do not go out and purchase brand-new equipment.** Many of the things you and your family will need are already around the house.

### HOW SHOULD MY FAMILY PACK?

There is no room in the tents and cabins for footlockers or trunks. Suitcases tend to be very bulky and often won't fit under a cot. We recommend backpacks or duffel bags with carrying straps.

### ORGANIZATION TIPS

Camp can be messy. Tents and cabins tend to become messy and campers often say "I can't find my sweatshirt!"

For those less-than-organized campers we suggest packing a day's worth of clothes in a zip-lock bag (the gallon size work great). Each morning your daughter can reach into her duffel bag and pull out an entire outfit. Extra socks, shirts, etc., can be put in other zip-locks and labeled. This system works really well for younger campers too.



### **PACKING LIST: Essential Items**

- |                                 |   |                                  |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| ┌ t-shirts or blouses           | ┌ socks (worn all the time)                         | ┌ sunscreen                      |
| ┌ shorts, jeans, long pants     | ┌ a hat   | ┌ flashlight and extra batteries |
| ┌ warm sweatshirt or sweater    | ┌ WARM sleeping bag w/ warm blanket NO SLUMBER BAGS |                                  |
| ┌ warm jacket                   | ┌   |                                  |
| ┌ rain gear (poncho or coat)    | ┌ <b>2-3 washable facemasks</b>                     |                                  |
| ┌ bathing suit                  | ┌ laundry bag                                       |                                  |
| ┌ sturdy shoes, sneakers, boots | ┌ toiletries  |                                  |
| ┌ underwear                     | ┌ towels and washcloths                             | ┌ canteen or water bottle        |
| ┌ pajamas                       | ┌ insect repellent                                  | ┌ small backpack /nap sack       |

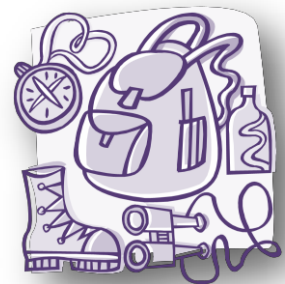
### **OPTIONAL ITEMS LIST:**

- |                                     |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pillow     | <input type="checkbox"/> camera and film (no digital) | <input type="checkbox"/> compass        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> stationery and stamps        | <input type="checkbox"/> stuffed animal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> books      |   |   |

### **WHAT NOT TO PACK**

Safety at camp continues to be our number one priority. To avoid temporary confiscation of undesirables, we ask that parents please examine your child's belongings prior to her arrival at camp. We thank you for your assistance and understanding.

- ┌ Candy, gum, food and snacks of any kind
- ┌ Fruity-smelling deodorant or toothpaste
- ┌ Body sprays or perfumes & aerosol containers of any kind
- ┌ Valuable jewelry
- ┌ iPods/iPads
- ┌ Cell phones and digital cameras
- ┌ Pocket knives or weapons of any kind
- ┌ Permanent markers



### **LOST AND FOUND**

All lost and found items will be held at Camp until September 30<sup>th</sup>. After that items will no longer be held for claim. Please label every item your child brings or wears.

## Getting To Camp

### DIRECTIONS TO CAMP TIMBERCREST-

**Please put the following address into your GPS – 11169 Moore Road, Randolph, NY**

## CAMP TIMBERCREST 55<sup>th</sup> CELEBRATION WEEKEND July 29-31, 2022

### Arriving at Camp

- **If you have registered for the entire weekend event (Friday-Sunday), registration will be from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
- **If you registered just for the day, please plan on arriving at 9 a.m. on Saturday.**
- **If you are staying over on Friday night only you can depart anytime on Saturday. Please remember to checkout with one of our Timbercrest staff members.**

**Plan on spending some time waiting in your vehicle in the parking lot we will make every effort to move the line along quickly.**

The entire check-in process will be explained on the following pages, but here are some tips to make check-in go more smoothly.

- **Due to COVID guidelines we are asking all camp families to please remain in your vehicles**
- Have all medications ready to be turned into the nurse.

### STAGGERED CHECK-IN TIMES

In an effort to decrease congestion during check-in, we are staggering check-in times based on the first letter of your family's last name. We thank you for your cooperation.

7 p.m. A-G	8 p.m. H-Z
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### CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

**We make every effort to move your family through the check-in process as quickly as we can. We ask for your patience and understanding when delays occur.**

- When you arrive at camp, you will be met by a Timbercrest or Seven Hills staff member who will direct you to the parking lot
- **You will be required to PLEASE REMAIN IN YOUR VEHICLE**
- The camp health supervisor will come to your vehicle to take temperatures of each family member, ask the required COVID 19 health screening questions and collect any medication. **Please review our COVID 19 guidelines on pages 4-5 for further clarification/details.**
- Once the camp health supervisor clears your family's attendance at camp, a camp counselor will escort you to your unit.
- A Timbercrest camp counselor will collect your family's luggage from your vehicle and place it under the shelter marked with your unit sign. It will then be transferred to your unit by designated Camp Timbercrest staff member.

### SCHEDULE

**All programing, including the closing campfire will occur on Saturday.** You will receive a schedule of the weekend events upon registration. Please keep this schedule with you the entire time. Activities such as swimming, boating, arts and crafts, archery, & hikes will be ongoing throughout the day on Saturday. Attendance at these activities will be monitored so as not to exceed the required number for proper social distancing. If an activity area is at capacity you will be instructed by the staff member in charge of that activity to come back at a different timeslot. **Families attending events on Friday night please note that no programing will occur. However, there will be campfires and s'mores available in each unit.**

## SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

Camping participants will be placed in our platform or cabin tent units unless you specified a special accommodation on your registration application.



## TRAVEL TRAILERS AND PERSONAL SLEEPING TENTS

Participants may opt to bring their personal camping tent. If you did not indicate this on the registration form please contact us to let us know. Participants may also be able to bring their personal travel trailers; however, prior approval is needed to determine proper space. Please note that if permission is given there are no hookups of any kind for travel trailers.

## FAMILY PLACEMENT

For the safety of all, families will be placed in their own sleeping units. We will make every effort to place your family with your friend request.

## UNPACKING

When you arrive at your family's unit, you will be greeted by one of our camp staff. Once your family's luggage arrives, we ask that you unpack and get settled.

## DEPARTING FROM CAMP

- Please make sure you are checking your family out with one of our camp staff members. Please remember to collect your family's medication from the nurse, if you brought any.
- Your families luggage will be under the tent marked with your unit sign
- PLEASE CHECK LOST AND FOUND!!!!!!!!!!!!



## CAMPER AND PARENT CAMP AGREEMENT

**Parent/Guardian:** The safety and well-being of your child is our number one concern. Therefore, this camp agreement has been developed to help you and your daughter understand our safety regulations at camp. We ask that you and your daughter read over this camp agreement. **You no longer need to bring this form to camp, but you and your daughter are still expected to comply with this agreement.**

We agree that our child will attend camp and follow all rules, regulations, and safety guidelines.\* We also understand that, if while at camp our child prevents the staff from safely supervising her and/or others or becomes harmful to herself, to campers or to staff, she will be in violation of this camp agreement and could be sent home from camp. If this situation does occur, we understand that we or the designated emergency contact person (if parents/guardians cannot be reached) will be responsible for taking our child home from camp. If our child is sent home from camp, we understand that there will be no reimbursement monetary or otherwise.

We as parents/guardians agree to and accept all rules, regulations, and safety guidelines\* provided for our daughter as set forth by camp. We also agree that as parents/guardians we will not make any unreasonable demands of camp in relation to our daughter's participation at camp.

**Participating Camper:** As a participating member at camp, I agree to adhere to all rules, regulations and safety guidelines\* set forth at camp. I understand that if I put the safety of other campers, staff members, or myself in danger or if I prevent the staff from safely supervising me or others, I will be in violation of this camp agreement and will be sent home from camp.

My daughter and I have read, understand, and agree to the terms and conditions of this camp agreement.

### Rules, Regulations and Safety Guidelines

1. Fun, friends, and lots of laughter.
2. Campers will be respectful, at all times, of themselves and others.
3. **Campers will not verbally or physically threaten, abuse, or harm other campers and/or staff at any time while at camp and/or on the bus to and from camp. \*\***
4. Campers will be respectful, at all times, of others' personal property.
5. The use of alcohol, non-prescribed drugs, and tobacco is strictly prohibited.
6. Campers will be respectful, at all times, of all camp property and equipment.
7. Campers always travel (whether on or off the camp property) with a buddy.
8. Cell phones, digital cameras, portable TVs, iPods, iPads, MP3 Players, personal sports equipment, and pets, as well as weapons of any kind, are strictly prohibited.
9. Campers are always supervised by the camp staff.
10. Campers are required to participate in all aspects of camp life (i.e., unit and all-camp campers, all-camp activities, emergency practice drills, etc.).
11. Campers will not pack or bring to camp gum, candy, cookies, or snacks of any kind.

\*\*Parents/guardians, the aforementioned safety rules, regulations, and safety guidelines are put in place for the safety of our camp patrons. Our staff will work with your child to make sure that these safety regulations are adhered to and that everyone at camp has an enjoyable experience. However, there are some displays of behavior or actions that are unacceptable and require immediate action. **If your child displays any type of the following behaviors while at camp or on the bus, she will be removed from the camp program.**

- Biting
- Spitting at campers or staff
- Destroying camp property
- Destroying personal property
- Hitting campers or staff
- Running away from the group

## CAMP PROCEDURES REGARDING THE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY

**Camp and Parent/Guardian Partnership:** Our promise to you is to continue to build your trust in us. These procedures/guidelines will be enforced to ensure the continued safety and security of your daughter(s) while at camp. We can't do this alone. We need your help. Please share this very important information with your daughter(s). Together we can make a difference!

**Your Daughter(s), Our Staff During Off-Peak Season:** We recognize and understand that campers and counselors can develop close, trusting relationships with one another while at camp and that these relationships are healthy, wholesome, and beneficial to campers and staff alike. We also recognize and understand that it is natural for campers to want to keep in touch with their favorite counselors after camp. The Girl Scouts of Western New York, Inc. does not encourage or sanction the exchange of contact information between campers and the seasonal staff, nor do we take responsibility for what may occur as the result of such contact. ***Our procedure/guideline is to forbid the exchange of contact information of any kind between campers and the seasonal staff, whether paid or volunteer.*** While we cannot keep you from allowing your child to visit or communicate with one of our staff members, by doing so, you take full responsibility.

**Cell Phones:** Cell phones are not allowed at camp. There is one fundamental problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is trust. We understand that you are making a leap of faith by entrusting your daughter(s) over to the care of our counselors. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn, little by little, to solve some of their own challenges. We believe this emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. It is one important way your child develops greater resilience. Contacting you by phone essentially means they have not made this transition. It prevents us from getting to problems that may arise and addressing them quickly. Please know that you may communicate with the camp staff at any time during your daughter(s) stay at camp. We also agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in her adjustment to camp. ***You can help*** by talking with your daughter ***before she leaves for camp*** and telling her that there is always someone she can reach out to, whether it is her counselor, the Unit/Village Director, the Director, or camp nurse. Please review "preventing homesickness" in your parent guide. We all want the same thing: For your daughter to have a successful camp experience.

**Digital Cameras:** To ensure the protection and privacy of campers, staff, etc., digital cameras are not permitted at camp. A camper taking inappropriate photos of campers and/or staff changing, showering, and uploading these photos on the Internet is strictly prohibited. Disposable cameras are permitted and encouraged. Parents/guardians, please help us maintain a safe environment by explaining this to your child (**please refer to the camper/parent agreement**) *Any camper that takes a compromising photograph of another camper or staff member and uploads it on the Internet or makes it public in anyway may be subject to dismissal from camp or may not be allowed to return. If the law is broken, the appropriate authorities will be notified.*

# Children's Camps in New York State



In New York State, summer camps must have a state, city or county health department permit to operate legally. These permits are issued only if the camp is in compliance with the state's health regulations. The permit to operate must be displayed in a conspicuous place on the premises.

The camp must be inspected twice yearly by a health department representative. At least one inspection must be made during the time the camp is in operation. Each camp is checked to make sure that the physical facilities are safe and that supervision is adequate.

When choosing a summer camp for your child, consider the following:

## Staff Credentials/Supervision

### What are the qualifications of the camp director?

The New York State Health Code requires that the director of an overnight camp be at least 25-years-old or hold a bachelor's degree; a day camp director must be at least 21-years-old.

All directors must have experience in camping administration or supervision. Camp directors' backgrounds are screened by the Office of Children and Family Services Central Register Database for reported incidents of child abuse and maltreatment. Their backgrounds are also screened by the Health Department for criminal convictions. Only individuals who are considered to pose no risk to campers are accepted by the Health Department as camp directors.

### What are the qualifications of the camp counselors and how are campers supervised?

Counselors must have experience in camping and supervision of children or have completed an acceptable training course. Stringent counselor-to-camper ratios and staff qualifications are mandated for supervision of swimming, archery, riflery and camp trip activities.

At overnight camps, 80 percent of the camps' counselors must be at least 18-years-old; up to 20 percent may be 17-years-old. There must be at least one counselor for every 10 children aged eight years or older, and one counselor for every eight children younger than eight years old.

At day camps, counselors must be 16 years of age or older. There must be a minimum of one counselor for every 12 children.

Camps that must provide at least 10 counselors may choose to use counselors-in-training (CITs) to meet 10 percent of the required number of counselors. These CITs must be at least 16 years of age at an overnight camp and 15 years of age at a day camp. They must work with senior staff, have had previous experience as a camper and complete a training program.

Ask the camp operator if any of their counselors are CITs and how they are used to supervise campers.

**Ask about the camp's staff and supervision procedures, including discipline policies. Do they meet your expectations?**

## Health

**Ask about medical coverage and when you will be notified if your child becomes ill or injured.**

**Is a doctor or nurse in residence or on call for campers at all times?**

Physicians or nursing services must be available. All summer camps in New York State are required to have a health director and a written medical plan approved by the Health Department. The written plan must include, among other things, provisions for medical, nursing and first aid services. Injuries and illnesses must be reported to the Health Department and are thoroughly reviewed.

**Does the camp require medical records for campers?**

Camps must keep current medical history reports on file for all campers. Be sure to detail your child's history of immunization, illness, disability or allergy. Specify special diets and activity restrictions. Provide instruction for any medication your child must take.

## Camp Safety

**Are the camp facilities and activities safe?**

The camp operator must develop a written plan to include maintenance of facilities, provisions for training staff members and orientation of campers, supervision of campers, campsite hazards, emergency procedures and drills, safety procedures and equipment for program activities.

## Swimming

**Are waterfront personnel qualified?**

**Are campers always supervised while in the water?**

All waterfront activities at camps in New York State must be supervised by an experienced certified lifeguard or water safety instructor. On site, one qualified lifeguard is required for every 25 bathers. All aquatic staff are required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

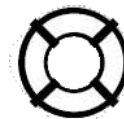
Camps that use off-site pools or beaches operated by others must make special arrangements to provide a safe activity. Even off site, the camp remains responsible for supervising campers.

Some children's camps use sites for swimming that are not inspected by local health departments. Parental permission is required in these instances, and the camp must follow established guidelines to protect campers.

While campers are involved in aquatic activities on site, there must be one counselor for every 10 campers eight years or older; there must be one counselor for every eight children aged six and seven; and one counselor for every six children younger than six years old. When swimming off-site, there must be one counselor for every eight campers six years or older and one counselor for every six campers younger than six years.

Are bathing areas marked off for various swimming skills? Are campers tested to determine their level of swimming ability before participating in aquatic activities? Are non-swimmers kept in water less than chest deep? Is the buddy system used?

Are campers required to wear life preservers when boating or canoeing? New York State regulation requires that the answers to all these questions must be "yes."



## Camp Trips

Are camp trips supervised by counselors who have the maturity and experience to make decisions that could affect the safety of campers?

All trips must be supervised by a trip leader who is at least 18 years old and competent in the activity. Counselors must accompany trips and all staff must review the safety plan prior to the trip. Counselors should have the skills and expertise in the camp activity (canoeing, rock-climbing, etc.) to handle any emergency that might arise. Ask whether the camp has conducted similar trips in the past without incident. In New York State, the drivers of camp vehicles must be licensed and at least 18-years-old. Seat belts must be worn when provided and vehicle capacities not exceeded. When transporting children in a truck, only a truck cab can be used.



## Sports and Activities

How are activities in craft shops supervised, especially when campers are using dangerous tools, such as power saws and lathes? Are archery and rifle ranges at a safe distance from activity centers? Are spectators protected at baseball fields and similar areas? Do players wear protective equipment?

State regulation requires that archery, riflery and horseback riding be supervised by counselors with special training in those activities.



## Fire Safety

Are there periodic fire drills for both campers and staff? Does each floor of every

building have fire exits in two different locations? Are flammable materials (gasoline, pool chemicals, etc.) stored away from activity centers and kept under lock and key? Are functioning smoke detectors located in every sleeping room?

All of the above are mandatory in New York State.

## Location and Facilities

Are barriers erected against such natural hazards as cliffs and swamps? Are foot trails located away from such dangerous areas and from heavily traveled roads and highways? Do the camp facilities (bunks, bathrooms, mess hall, recreation facilities) meet your aesthetic tastes and those of your child? Is the camp located in an area that will not aggravate your child's allergies? Will your child be required to perform chores, such as cleaning or cooking?

For information on the camp's location and facilities, visit the camp or interview the camp operator by telephone, prior to making a decision to enroll your child at the camp.

## Nutrition

Are good health practices observed in the camp kitchens, dining areas and food services? Does the camp serve food your child likes?



At camps in New York State, food must be prepared from inspected sources. Food preparation and

handling activities are reviewed to assure safe and sanitary practices. Kitchen employees must be healthy and follow hygienic practices. Potentially hazardous food must be maintained below 45°F or above 140°F.

## Rights and Responsibilities

The regulatory program of the New York State Department of Health places specific responsibilities on camp operators, and on local health departments that enforce department regulations. Following is a summary of rights and responsibilities:

### Rights of Parents and Guardians

- To be informed by the camp director, or his or her designee, of any incident involving your child, including serious injury, illness or abuse.

- To review inspection and investigation reports for a camp, which are maintained by the local health department issuing the camp a permit to operate (present and past reports are available).

- To review the required written camp plans. These are on file at both the camp and the health department issuing the permit to operate.

### Responsibilities of the Camp Operator

- To inform you and the local health department if your child is involved in any serious injury, illness or abuse incident.
- To screen the background and qualifications of all staff.
- To train staff about their duties.
- To provide supervision for all campers 24 hours a day at overnight camps, and during hours of operation for day camps.
- To maintain all camp physical facilities in a safe and sanitary condition.
- To provide safe and wholesome meals.
- To have and follow required written plans for camp safety, health and fire safety.
- To notify the parent or guardian, with the enrollment application or enrollment contract, that:
  - the camp must have a permit to operate from the New York State Department of

Health or the designated permit-issuing official;

- the camp is required to be inspected twice yearly; and

- the inspection reports and required plans are filed (address of state, county or city health department) and available for their review.

## Responsibilities of Local Health Departments

- To review and approve the required written camp plans for compliance.

- To inspect camps to assure that: (1) all physical facilities are properly operated and maintained; and (2) adequate supervision exists to provide a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the New York State Sanitary Code.

- To issue a permit to operate when the required plans and inspection results are satisfactory.

- To investigate reports of serious incidents of injury, illness and all allegations of abuse or maltreatment.

- When requested, to provide parents or guardians of prospective campers an opportunity to review inspection reports and required plans.

The time and effort spent in selecting the camp your youngster will attend is important. Keep in touch, especially if it is your child's first camp experience. If possible, visit the camp before and during the camping season.

## Information

For further information about New York State health laws relating to summer camps, call the State Health Department's Bureau of Community Environmental



Health and Food Protection in Troy at 1-  
(800) 458-1158, ext. 27600.