

# PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE



## IMPORTANT STEPS

01

### FORMS

Required camp forms are located in your family's CampMinder account. Please make sure that ALL forms are submitted no later than **June 1st** to attend camp.

02

### MEDICATIONS

Update your campers online health history form to reflect current status of all medications.

On check in, all medications (including OTC and vitamins) must be submitted to our camp nurses. Prescriptions must be in original bottle and individually stored in a plastic zipper bag.

If your camper has been prescribed a dosage change or new medication in the past 60 days please email Camp Birch Hill with the details

03

### PACK INTENTIONALLY

Check out our packing list here: [PACKING LIST](#) and continue reading for important guidance and items to avoid

04

### PRIORITIZE PHYSICAL + MENTAL HEALTH

Do not send your child to camp sick! They will not enjoy themselves and it puts others at risk. We recommend checking for temperature and symptoms prior to leaving for camp. **If your camper presents sick at check in they will be sent home.** Partnership with camp families on this keeps our camp community healthy.

We also recommend taking a moment to see how they are feeling about heading to camp. Each year we find that campers who arrive with a clear idea of their support systems and expectations really thrive. Continue reading for specific tips.

05

### READ THE REST OF THIS GUIDE

Stay up to date on our current policies.

# INFORMATION AND POLICIES

We believe parents play an integral role in the success of each child's camp experience and ask for your support with all of our camp policies. Some of our policies do change over the years, so please read through this document and do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions or concerns regarding your campers stay.

## PACKING

For a list of items to bring, head to our [PACKING LIST](#)  
Here are some important things to remember:



**Water bottles are required.** We do not have/sell single use bottles. Instead, there are fill stations located throughout camp



**Please label all belongings.** This includes shirts, pants, socks, underwear, towels, sleeping bag, pillow, footwear, toiletries and any sports equipment they bring. Remind campers of their responsibility to keep track of their belongings while at camp.



**No phones or electronic devices that connect to the internet.**

Campers found with these devices may be asked to leave camp. Summer camp is one of the last places where kids can really be present everyday. Camp Birch Hill is a place to connect with nature, yourself, and your community. Please support us in preserving this important experience. (For music, campers may bring mp3 players or other music devices that do not connect to the internet.)



**Do not pack items, jewelry, clothing, or cash of significant value.**

Camp Birch Hill is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Campers will have no need for a credit card or large amounts of cash. We do have a camp store, but it is only stocked with our branded clothing and small snack/candy items. If you want to send your camper with money for the camp store, we strongly recommend less than \$50



**Absolutely ZERO peanuts or tree nuts.**

Campers may bring a few snacks to camp provided they do not contain any peanuts or tree nuts. Due to serious allergy danger, we require that even items listed as "may contain nuts" or "processed in a facility that also processes nuts" do not come to this space. Campers must bring all snacks in an airtight container no larger than 14x10x6 (7 quarts). Items which do not meet these requirements will be removed from the cabin.

## HEALTH

The health of every camper is our biggest priority. At all hours we have a camp nurse on duty in our Health Center. The Health Center is well stocked with first aid equipment and basic over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol (in several forms), Motrin, Ibuprofen, Actifed, Benadryl, Claritin, Tums, Imodium, Kaopectate, Robitussin, and many more.



Each of our nurses are properly licensed as RNs or LNAs. They support all campers through the usual bumps and bruises of adolescent life. They will also make the decision to bring any campers experiencing larger health challenges to the hospital when necessary.

### Upon Arrival

- One of our nurses will perform a brief health assessment. They will take each camper's temperature and perform a head lice check. We recommend proactively checking your child's head and temperature to minimize any surprises.
- Any campers that are sick will be asked to return after they have recovered. We do not plan to test for any specific illnesses upon arrival. However we suggest testing for COVID-19 prior to arrival, especially if your child has been exhibiting common symptoms.
- ALL MEDICATIONS (including prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, vitamins, & supplements) must be submitted to the camp nurse at check-in and kept in the health center at all times. Please do not send Tylenol or Ibuprofen to camp unless your child takes them daily as these are stocked in the Health Center.



## HYGIENE

Campers are expected to care for themselves by:

- Getting plenty of sleep
- Brushing teeth twice a day
- Eating healthfully
- Washing hands often
- Drinking plenty of water
- Checking for ticks.
- Showering and changing into clean clothes daily
- Using sunscreen & insect repellent appropriately



Birch Hill staff members provide gentle reminders, but families should set expectations regarding personal hygiene before arrival at camp.

Coach your child to tell an adult if they are hurt, feeling ill, or have noticed an unusual symptom! Let them know that their cabin counselor and the nurse will help them at any time of day or night if they aren't feeling well.

## LAUNDRY

There are laundry facilities on camp and campers' laundry is done halfway through each two week session. It is very important that every clothing item is labeled with your child's name to reduce lost laundry.



# COMMUNICATION DURING CAMP

## **Sending Letters**



Feel free to send letters during a camper's stay or encourage other family/friends to do so. We recommend sending any letters early in a camper's session to ensure they arrive in time. Make sure to address the envelope as follows:

Camper Name  
Cabin Name/Number (given at arrival)  
Camp Birch Hill  
333C Birch Hill Road  
New Durham, NH 03855

## **No-Package Policy**

In an effort to create an inclusive environment, reduce waste, and to limit the presence of prohibited items/allergens, Camp Birch Hill has a no package policy.

***All packages shipped to Camp Birch Hill will be returned to sender.***



If your child has a birthday during camp, you may bring a care package with you and give it to our office staff during check in. Birthday packages must be clearly labeled with your camper's name followed by "birthday package" and include their birthday. We will make sure they get it on the correct day.

If your camper forgets something at home, please contact the main office at (603-859-4525). We will determine if we are easily able to provide the camper with the missing item (such as a toothbrush or a sleeping bag) or we will give instructions on how to send the item.

## **Phone Calls**



Unless your child is asking to call home, we kindly request that you allow them time to acclimate and enjoy being at camp. We hope that you will wait until they return home to hear about all the fun they have had. We understand that you are eager or even anxious to hear how your children are doing at camp, but it is also really important to allow time for them to adjust to their new environment here. We have learned many times that speaking to parents shortly after arriving at camp can lead to increased homesickness. If your child is attending our longer 4-week or 6-week sessions, you may contact the office and we will happily schedule a phone call with them.

## **Visitor Policy**



Parents/Guardians are not permitted to visit while camp is in session. This policy includes our "Transition Days" between sessions. We have so many wonderful families of campers, but it would be incredibly logistically challenging to welcome you all while camp is in session. Unfortunately visitors tend to disrupt the flow of the day and can be difficult for children whose parents do not have the means to visit. We do allow visitors during our off-season, but ask that you reach out to us for permission before arriving.

## CAMPER BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

**Campers must be able to understand safety/emergency instructions and be willing to adhere to them.** The safety of our campers is our top priority. Camp Directors reserve the right to dismiss a camper for not complying with expectations. All of our campers must:

- Stay within camp boundaries or any boundaries set during off-camp trips.
- Never use or possess alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, or any illegal drugs.
- Never use or possess weapons of any sort.
- Refrain from fighting, bullying, stealing, or intentionally offending others
- Only use approved technology at appropriate times
- Wear appropriate footwear and safety equipment like helmets specified by each activity
- Listen to and follow directions from all camp staff.

**It is important that a camper's behavior does not interfere with other campers enjoying their camp experience.** Camp Birch Hill prides itself on being a friendly community. We welcome, support and celebrate all children no matter their economic, ethnic, geographic, racial, religious, gender or social group. We want to foster inclusivity and envision a camp where all experiences are valued. In order for our community to thrive, we expect everyone here to display positive and inclusive behavior while at camp.

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## PHOTOGRAPHS



We do our best to post photos often (typically once a week on our social media pages), but please understand that our first priority is to be sure our campers are happy, healthy and safe. If you are not comfortable with your campers photos being online, please let us know. Otherwise, Camp Birch Hill reserves the right to use any pictures and/or video of campers for advertising or marketing purposes in both print and digital form.

## ARRIVAL TIME



We ask that campers arrive based on age to create the smoothest experience possible. Please review the table below and plan to arrive accordingly on check-in day. If you have more than one camper coming to Camp Birch Hill on the same day **we request that you arrive at the time for your oldest camper.** You can check everyone in at that time.

ARRIVAL WINDOW	9:30 - 10:15	10:15 - 11:15	11:15 - 12:15	12:15 - 1:00
AGE	Ages 15 - 16	Ages 13 - 14	Ages 10 - 12	Ages 6 - 9

## HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED AT CAMP

Over the years, we have helped many parents and campers succeed at their first experience away from home. Here are some simple tips to help manage stress and set them up for an enjoyable time:

Let's start with the most important: **NO PICK UP DEALS**. Do not tell your child you will pick them up from camp if they don't like it, or are missing home. This may set your child up to fail, as the first time something does not go exactly as planned or feels unfamiliar they will want to go home. Furthermore, children typically lose any and all motivation to try to succeed at camp if they think a you are coming to pick them up. They will spend the entire day wondering when a parent is coming instead of trying to have fun. Part of why camp so special is that it is radically different from their regular schedule. Kids love this, but as with any change, learning how to work through different situations isn't always immediately easy. However, with a surprisingly small amount of time, what may seem like a difficult situation is replaced with a fun-filled, busy and exciting next day at camp. Please know that some of the campers who miss home the most at the beginning of camp are the same campers who do not want to leave at the end of the session, and end up returning for year after year.

If they are feeling nervous, you can:

- Acknowledge and validate any thoughts your child may be having about camp such as feeling anxious, apprehensive, nervous, and excited. These are all common! Let them know most campers are feeling the same way before camp and maybe share how you felt the first time you took a trip on your own.
- After you hear them out, make sure you express that you are excited for them! Communicate confidence that they will have so much fun when they get here.
- Discuss what camp will be like way before it is time to leave. If they are nervous about any particular elements, consider role-playing a scenario. For example, what will it be like trying an activity for the first time? What will you say to people you are introduced to in your cabin the first day? Or how will you ask for help if you need it? There is no need to fixate on them if they are not nervous, but helping them to process a little beforehand can be really helpful.
- Pack their favorite stuffed animal or blanket to make them comfortable.
- Send them with photos of your family or pets so that they will have a reminder of home and something to share with a counselor or friends.
- Send a letter before camp even begins so it is waiting for them upon arrival at camp.
- Give them a cheery send-off! Goodbyes are the hardest (for parents particularly) the first year. It really will get significantly easier in succeeding years for both you and your child. If your goodbye is prolonged and focused on being sad that you won't see them for a couple weeks, it can feel really scary and final for a young person leaving home for the first time.

Try not to worry! Know that our staff are taking great care of your child!  
Feel free to email or call us any time if you have concerns.