

Camp Leslie Parent Handbook



West Main Street
Georgetown, Massachusetts 01833
Web: www.campleslie.org
Phone: (978) 352-8060
Founded in 1939

CAMP LESLIE MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is to create an enjoyable, safe, and nurturing environment where we can provide the camp community the opportunity to learn and grow physically, emotionally, and socially while respecting and encouraging each other’s individuality, strengths, and interests.”

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Introduction

This guide is published to help you, the parents of our campers, prepare for your children's upcoming experience with us at Camp Leslie. We recognize that you have many alternatives when choosing a summer program for your child, and we appreciate you giving us the opportunity to give your camper a fun, safe, and supportive environment in which to grow. Please read this guide book carefully, and contact us if you have any further questions.

Program and Activity Offerings

Camp Leslie offers a variety of Programs and Activities during a camp week. Campers choose their programs during Sunday Registration. Campers spend four periods a day in these programs, which fall into three major categories:

WATERFRONT

- Swimming
- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Fishing
- Water Games

CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

- Low/High Ropes Course
- "Survivor" (Outdoor Living Skills)
- Team Sports
- Nature Studies
- Archery
- Rocketry

CREATIVE ARTS

- Dance
- Drama
- Arts & Crafts

In addition, every week is assigned a theme at Camp Leslie. Past themes have included Winter Week, Olympic Week, Hollywood Week, Holiday Week, Circus Week, Extreme Theme Week, Time Travel Week, Pirates of Pentucket Pond Week, and Medieval Week. Campers also take part in the following activities:

- Team/Cabin Competitions
- Water Carnivals
- Talent/Skit Night
- Theme Week Events (i.e., karaoke, carnivals)
- Thursday Night Dance
- Friday Candlelight Ceremony

Payment Policies

The balance of your camper's tuition is due by June 15th. Full payment is always required prior to the start of your child's camp experience.

Payment can be made by bank check, money order or credit card only. Personal checks will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Discounts

There is an early registration discount available for those who wish to enroll early. Please see the current version of the Camp Leslie brochure and our website for details.

Financial Aid

The camp has limited resources available for scholarships which are awarded to families demonstrating financial need. Our policy is to try and assist as many families as possible through partial scholarships. Please contact us by calling the Camp Office for an application if you wish to be considered.

Refunds

Last minute cancellations represent a financial loss to the camp. After a space has been reserved, it is often difficult to find a replacement. Refunds will be issued to individuals who give at least one week cancellation notice to the camp. Prorated refunds for campers who are sent home due to illness will be considered by the Board of Trustees at the end of the season. All requests must be made in writing. Refunds will not be issued to campers who go home as a result of being homesick or who are asked to leave camp due to a behavioral incident. The \$100 deposit is not refundable in all cases.

Directions to Camp

From I-95, take Exit 54B (Route 133 West), and travel until you reach Georgetown Center. Go through the traffic light, and continue for ¼ mile. Camp Leslie will be on your right hand side.

Sunday Registration

We begin Registration for each week promptly at 3 p.m. Campers will not be accepted prior to this time under any circumstances. Registration begins on the porch of the Main Lodge (Waterfront side). The registration process takes place in the following locations and in the following order:

Lodge Porch

Cabin assignment

Turn in authorized release form

Pick up T-shirt (if purchased)

Infirmary

Health check

Turn in medication

Turn in Health History form and proof of physical

Waterfront

Swim test

Cabins

Program Selection

While there are separate (and shorter!) processes for returning campers, all campers must check in at each location to complete Registration.

Health Services

The promotion of your camper's health and safety remains our highest priority at Camp Leslie. The camp employs a full time Health Care Manager (a licensed Registered Nurse). Our Infirmary is located centrally in a separate building and is staffed 24 hours a day. We have a Health Care Consultant who provides us with guidance when needed and reviews our Health Care Plan annually. In addition, all of our senior staff members have current certification in First Aid and CPR.

In the unlikely event of an emergency, the Emergency Medical System will be activated by calling 911. Campers will be transported by EMS to either Merrimack Valley Hospital (Haverhill) or Anna Jacques Hospital (Newburyport). Parents will be notified (by the Health Care Manager or the Camp Director) immediately of all pertinent details. A Senior Staff member will accompany the camper to the hospital and remain with him/her until the parent arrives. The camp will always err on the side of

caution and will not hesitate to call EMS when there seems to be the slightest possibility of serious injury.

In the event that a camper becomes ill or injured, and cannot continue at camp, his/her parent will be notified and will be requested to pick up the camper immediately. We are unable to keep ill/injured children at camp. Any ill/injured child will be kept in the isolation room of the Infirmary until the parent arrives. In many cases, the camp will require a doctor's certificate prior to the camper's return to camp.

In order to assist us in providing the best care, all campers must furnish a green ACA health history form and physician's statement of health status (physical) written within 2 years of camp entrance. **Please mail these forms to camp in accordance to the registration packet you receive in the off-season.** If you register later in the year please bring these documents with you to Sunday Registration. In the event of missing or incomplete medical forms, please be advised that **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO REMAIN AT CAMP UNTIL THE FORM IS COMPLETE AND ON FILE IN THE INFIRMARY.**

If your camper is prescribed certain medications during the school year, it is our expectation that you maintain the prescription(s) while at camp. We have found "drug holidays" or medication modifications immediately prior to camp (or while at camp) to be counter productive.

By rule, **CAMPERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE MEDICATION, INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS, IN THEIR CABINS.** All medications must be turned in to the Health Care Manager during Sunday Registration. All medications must be in their original container with the physician's prescription on it.

All campers will be checked by the Health Care Manager as part of the Sunday Registration process. Please advise us upon your arrival of any recent developments regarding your child's health, such as exposure to infectious diseases.

Responsibilities of the Camper

Please review the sheet in your Acceptance Packet entitled "Responsibilities of the Camper" with your camper prior to his/her arrival. It contains common sense expectations for overall behavior while at camp. We ask that a child not leave all of their good manners at home and that, while at camp, we follow certain guidelines for our behavior in the camp community.

The camp has a number of systems in place to recognize and respond to behaviors that are detrimental to the health of the community and its members. With many behaviors, we will work with the camper highlighting that which is appropriate and attempt to implement strategies for improvement. We will often enter into personal behavior contracts with the camper outlining specific expectations and consequences.

Certain behaviors (or repeated infractions) rise to the level of needing to contact parents. Often we seek guidance as to strategies that may have worked at home or school that we may employ with your child at camp. We will also outline for you the consequences if the behavior persists. This would likely be dismissal. Some behaviors, such as the possession/use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco, possession of weapons, or violence towards another camper will result in immediate dismissal.

We also expect that you will share your camper other expectations outlined throughout this guide.

Cabin Assignments

Cabin assignments are made in the best interest of the camp, your camper, and other campers. Cabin assignments are completed the week prior to each session, and campers are assigned to cabins by their age. Large cabins accommodate ten campers and two staff members, while small cabins house four campers and one staff member. Cabinmate requests are honored if possible, but will not be honored in any case for campers who are more than one year apart in age. CIT's are not allowed to make cabinmate requests, as living with various age groups is a requirement of their training. Please keep in mind that Camp Leslie is a small camp with proximate living quarters; the campers are never far apart and spend much of their day in activities together.

Gratuities

Parents are asked not to tip staff members. Words and letters of appreciation are gratefully received. If you wish to show your appreciation further, we encourage you to make a donation to the camp. Camp Leslie is a not-for-profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible. You may choose to specify that your donation is for a particular object or item or is made on behalf of the efforts of a particular staff member. We also encourage you to consider donations of items such as furniture, kitchen items, sporting goods, or tools. Please contact the Camp Director for details of what is needed at camp.

Pick Up Procedures

You may pick up your child from camp any time after 5 p.m. on Friday afternoon. You will sign out your camper at the Director's Cabin Picnic Table. Only those individuals who are on your Authorized Release Form will be allowed to retrieve your camper. Any necessary changes to this form must be made in advance with the Camp Director. After signing out your camper, you will receive a note card with your campers name on it. Please deliver this card to the cabin counselor (this is our proof that you have signed out your camper, and that they are back in your care).

The Friday Candlelight Ceremony begins at 5:45 at the Fire Circle, and concludes at 6:45. We do not offer dinner on Friday evenings, but you are more than welcome to bring a picnic dinner to share with your camper prior to the ceremony. The ceremony includes awards for campers who excelled in certain areas, as well as highlights of the week and a display or demonstration of accomplishments of our campers.

Please ensure that you take all your camper's belongings with you, including those items on the clotheslines. Any medication will be returned to you as you sign out your camper, as we do not keep these items at camp over the weekend.

Communicating with your Camper

Campers are not permitted to use the telephone while at camp without permission of the Camp Director or Health Care Manager. We strongly discourage telephone call between camper and parent. Feelings of missing home are exacerbated and can have a very negative impact on the camper's stay at camp (see "Homesickness" section below). For this same reason, **CELL PHONES ARE NOT ALLOWED AT CAMP** (see "Do Not Bring" section below). If there is a special occasion, such as a birthday, please send your best wishes in writing. If you have an urgent matter to discuss with your child, please call the Camp Director.

Visitation

All visitors (including parents) must sign in at the Camp Office. Campers will be called to the office to greet their visitor. Visitors may not enter the living areas (Boy's/Girl's Areas) without being escorted by a Staff member under any circumstances.

If for any reason you must take your child from camp, you must inform the Camp Director in advance. In order to ensure everyone's safety, we

must have an accurate headcount of our campers at all times. Any camper who leaves camp property must be signed in and out from the Camp Office, or from the Infirmary in case of illness. Upon returning to camp, campers may not be signed back in after "Taps" is played at 9:30 p.m. These campers must wait until 7:45 a.m. the following morning.

Parents are welcome to visit but should consider whether a visit is at all helpful. Even though your camper may be having the time of his/her life leading up to your visit, your presence can result in an intense desire to go home with you. It can be a traumatic time for both camper and parent. If you come to camp for a visit, and you experience this, please consult with the Camp Director. In rare instances, perhaps it is time to go home. However, most likely what you are facing is a phenomenon where, once you have left your child quickly goes about having a fantastic camp experience.

Homesickness

Spending the night away from home and your parents is a significant milestone and rite of passage that is important for children to achieve. Camp is a perfect environment to do this! We recognize, however, that some campers will struggle with feelings of homesickness from time to time. There are several strategies that can be used to help minimize the chance of this happening to your camper.

First of all, please do not promise your camper that if he does not wish to stay at camp that he/she can call you and you will come immediately to pick him/her up and bring him/her home. By making such a promise, the message is sent that you believe that he/she is unable to achieve this very important goal, and his/her focus will be on going home rather than enjoying camp.

Take the time to talk about camp with your camper, and what he/she can expect during his/her time with us (Daily Schedule, Program Offerings, etc.). Familiarity with camp will increase his/her comfort level, and decrease the chance of him/her becoming homesick.

Send a few familiar objects with your camper, such as a favorite blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal. This will certainly make your child more comfortable while at camp. In our experience, campers display more signs of homesickness at night when they are tired and not as busy. Keeping the bedtime routine as similar to home as possible by sending these objects could be the key to a successful week at camp for your camper.

When we sense a child is starting to struggle with signs of homesickness, we make every effort to keep this child as engaged possible. We find that keeping children busy and involved in the camp process cures most feelings of homesickness. Staff members are trained in how to communicate effectively with children who are struggling with homesickness, and will do everything in their power to make your camper comfortable and happy. If our efforts do not appear to alleviate these symptoms, we will contact you to see how you want us to proceed. In most cases, we will be able to talk a child through this process, and we will share some ideas and strategies with you during this phone call. If you decide to speak with your child, please know that once you make direct contact with your camper, it will be next to impossible to convince her to stay. If you make the choice to speak with your camper, be prepared to make the trip to camp immediately. We will make late night phone calls to parents only in instances of physical illness. We are confident we can keep your camper comfortable until the morning when we can reach you.

It is our policy that if a child is removed from camp for homesickness, he/she may not return to camp as an overnight camper. It has been our experience that children who leave camp due to homesickness and attempt to come back for another night are unsuccessful the second night as well. Arrangements may be made with the Camp Director regarding a switch to Day Camp. Refunds for homesickness are not issued.

Packages and Letters

Campers welcome packages from home. Appropriate items to send include books, comics, additional clothes and cards. Please resist pleas for food packages. In order to preserve healthy appetites and to prevent rodent and insect infestation, we ask for your cooperation with our policy: **DO NOT SEND OR BRING ANY FOOD, DRINKS, DRINK MIX, CANDY, OR GUM.** Packages to campers are opened by the camper at lunchtime in the Main Lodge in the presence of Staff. If they contain food, candy, gum, juice boxes, or soda, or other items deemed inappropriate, they will be taken away and kept in the Camp Office until Friday Pick Up. This creates a very difficult situation for both camper and staff that can be avoided. Please notify relatives of this policy (Please see the "Do Not Bring" section below). Campers with birthdays during camp receive a birthday cake during a meal on the day of their birthday and "Happy Birthday" is sung to them by all.

We ask that campers write home at least once during the camp week. For this purpose, we suggest that you supply your camper with pre-addressed post cards.

Usually a brief note from your child is indicative of a busy, happy camper. Please do not be overly alarmed if the note suggests otherwise. Campers are up and down emotionally, especially during the first few

days of camp. Also, keep in mind that when you receive the note, several days have passed since the note was written and it is likely that your camper is now happily involved in camp life. Please feel free to contact the Camp Director if you are concerned.

Campers love receiving short cheery letters from their parents! Please address your correspondence as follows:

Your Camper's Name
Camp Leslie
139 West Main Street
Georgetown, MA 01833

Packing List

Campers are encouraged to bring the following items to camp:

Twin sheets
Sleeping bag
Pillow
Towels (2)
Soap
Shampoo/Conditioner
Washcloth
Toothbrush/Toothpaste
Laundry Bag (a garbage bag!)
Bathing suits (2)
Flip-flops or water shoes
Sunscreen
Bug spray
Flashlight
Pen & paper for letter writing
Shorts (at least 5)
T-Shirts (at least 5)

Long Pants (at least 1)

Sweatshirts (at least 1)

Sneakers

Raincoat

Dressy clothes for Thursday Night Dance (check out the week's theme!)

Any necessary medications (bring to Infirmary during Registration, in the original container)

Do Not Bring

It is very important that this section be shared with your camper.

Following the review of your child's possessions while unpacking, should such items be found we will ask that you take them home with you.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING CELL PHONES. They can be disruptive to the camp community. In addition, we find that if a homesick camper contacts home without speaking with the Staff first, we have lost the opportunity to allow that camper to have a successful week.

It is our mission to provide a comfortable place where your camper can get "unplugged" from their daily life. We are aware that cell phones have become more and more a part of your camper's daily life, and we understand the desire for contact with your camper, however, part of the camp experience is to disconnect from the outside world, and become immersed with the camp experience.

Furthermore, a camper may feel an intense desire to sneak their cell phones on to camp grounds. It is important that you have a conversation with your camper regarding the importance of adhering to the rules of camp. Should you have any questions/concerns regarding how to have this conversation with your camper, or this policy as a whole do not hesitate to contact the Camp Director at director@campleslie.org. If a cell phone is discovered in your camper's

possession it will be stored in the Directors Cabin until departure. If you do not feel comfortable sending your camper without his/her cell phone it is possible that Camp Leslie may not be the camp for you.

Please do not bring televisions, laptop computers, portable stereo systems, handheld electronic games, or other electronic devices. Valuables are best left at home. The use of cameras is encouraged at camp, but beware that camp may not be the best place for valuable digital cameras. Single use disposable cameras are likely your best choice to ensure a safe return.

If your camper has an iPod or other mp3 player, be advised that they will not be allowed for use during the day, and that valuables are likely to become lost and/or destroyed during a week at camp. Please understand that Camp Leslie cannot be held responsible for the safe return of said items at the end of the week.

To avoid injury through careless use, we ask that campers not bring knives to camp with them. If your camper brings a knife, it will be safely stored in the Camp Office during the week and returned upon departure.

We strongly discourage your child from bringing Magic, Uh-Gi-Oh!, or Pokemon cards, which often seem to get "lost", creating ill will amongst campers. The camp cannot be held responsible for lost property. Also, please do not bring items such as:

Food, candy, gum, juice boxes/mix, soda
Skateboards
Money
Water guns
Roller blades

Candles
Bicycles
Combustible lanterns
Sling shots
Balloons (for latex allergy purposes)

Possession of pornography at camp is considered inappropriate. Parents of offenders will be notified, and the item will be secured in the Camp Office until departure.

Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or fireworks of any kind are forbidden and constitute grounds for immediate dismissal. We are serious about our commitment to keeping Camp Leslie a safe and healthy environment.

If you bring any of the above items, or other items deemed by the camp to be inappropriate, they will be safely stored during the week in the Camp Office and returned upon departure.

Office Hours

During the camp season, the office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. At other times (including the off-season), we will be checking voicemail routinely. Unless a call is of an urgent nature, it will be returned during office hours. Camp numbers are as follows:

Main Telephone Number: (978)352-8060

Fax Line: (978)945-3072

Please use fax line only for communicating important information to the Camp Office. Do not use it as a substitute for mailing a letter to your child.

Camp Photographs

Please ensure that you bring a signed Authorized/Photo Release Form with you to Sunday Registration, as we will be taking photographs every week and posting them to our website at www.campleslie.org for you to view and download as desired. This form will be mailed to you with your Acceptance Packet, and allows us to use photographs of your child in our camp's publicity. Names of individuals will never accompany their photographs on our site. If you do not wish to sign a Photo Release Form for your camper, please notify the Camp Director during Sunday Registration, and we will ensure that your camper will not appear in any publicity photographs.