



## Camp Felix

### Parent/Guardian Handbook

Hello and Welcome to Camp Felix!

In this handbook, you will find all the information you need to prepare your child for Camp Felix, including the following:

- General Camp Felix information – mission of camp, schedule, staff, food, facilities, safety, and more.
  - Bus pick up and drop off location information – in English and Spanish
  - What to bring to camp and what not to bring to camp – in English and Spanish
  - Camp contact information (address and phone number) – in English and Spanish
  - Camp Felix Code of Conduct, Camper attendance policy, Sick camper policy
  - Camps in NY State flyer from Department of Health
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### Why Camp?

At camp, kids have the opportunity to take risks, learn to accept challenges, and utilize their own untapped potential— skills that will help them succeed throughout their lives. By taking part in new activities and experiences, children develop self-esteem and independence, physical and cognitive skills, and positive values, in addition to social skills such as leadership and friendship.

### Camp Felix Mission and Vision

Camp Felix's Mission is to provide a positive and enriching overnight camp experience for children in need. To that end, Camp Felix aims to be a supportive camp community that enables each child to feel a sense of belonging in the world and to begin to gain the tools necessary to reach their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual potential. Camp Felix's Vision is that each child in need who attends Camp Felix will have a positive camp experience resulting in memories, achievements, and personal growth that will positively impact his or her life.



## **Camp Felix Staff:**

- Camp Felix Program Director position is currently held by Jane Feyder-Siegel.
- On-site Camp Director is Josh Hernandez.
- All camp staff is seasonal (hired for 5 weeks: 4 weeks of camp plus 1 week of training).
- The ratio of counselors to campers is one to four so campers receive a lot of individual attention.
- Most of our staff members are college-age and older, have experience working with children, and are working towards a career in education or social work.
- All staff members are screened and undergo criminal background checks and fingerprinting. Staff members also attend 7 days of training (both on and off the camp site) before camp starts, which includes Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, safety/emergency procedures, behavior management, conflict resolution, incident reporting, child abuse and maltreatment, child development, discipline, and much more.
- The Camp Felix staff recruitment process begins in February of each year and all applicants go through a rigorous interviewing and screening process. The same personnel policies that apply to full-time NYF staff apply to Camp Felix seasonal staff.

## **What Happens at Camp?**

### **Camp Activities**

Each summer, a great deal of preparation goes into finding and scheduling the most interesting, exciting, educational, and valuable activities for our campers. Below is just a sample of the activities and programs offered at camp:

- |                   |                                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Adventure games | • Drama/Theater                   | • Soccer                            |
| • Arts & Crafts   | • Drumming                        | • Softball/baseball                 |
| • Badminton       | • Football                        | • STEP                              |
| • Basketball      | • Kickball                        | • Storytelling around the camp fire |
| • BBQ Cookout     | • Leadership games and activities | • Swimming                          |
| • Board games     | • Mural Painting                  | • Talent Show                       |
| • Bookmaking      | • Nature activities               | • Tennis                            |
| • Campfires       | • Olympic Games                   | • Team-Building games               |
| • Climbing Wall   | • Photography                     | • Volleyball                        |
| • Cooking/Baking  | • Poetry/Creative writing         | • Yoga                              |
| • Dance           | • Scavenger Hunts                 |                                     |
| • Double-dutch    |                                   |                                     |

As you can see, Camp Felix days are jam packed with excitement! Therefore, it is important that we keep our daily format as structured as possible. Timeliness and punctuality are two important skills that all campers learn at camp. The daily schedule at Camp Felix is as follows:

7:15 AM	Wake up
8:00 AM	Morning Circle
8:15 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Cabin Cleanup
9:30 AM	First Activity
10:30 AM	Water Break
10:45 AM	Second Activity
12:00 PM	Lunch/Announcements/Cheers
1:00 PM	Rest Hour
2:00 PM	Third Activity: Electives
3:15 PM	Water Break
3:30 PM	Fourth Activity
4:30 PM	Afternoon Snack/Water Break
4:45 PM	Fifth Activity
5:45 PM	Cabin Cleanup/Ready for Dinner
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Prepare for Evening
7:30 PM	Evening Program
9:00 PM	Ready for Bed & Devotions
9:45 PM	Lights out



### **Camp Felix Food and Meals**

Camp Felix aims to ensure that all campers receive nutritious and tasty meals during their time at camp. A total of 3 meals are served per day – breakfast, lunch and dinner. In addition, one snack is provided each day which consists of fruit, cookies, ice cream, Jell-O, pudding, or something similar. Extensive menu planning takes place before camp starts as menus have to be approved by the Summer Food Service Program and the Department of Health. Camp Felix menus meet all nutritional requirements. Vegetarian, dairy-free, and gluten-free options are available at each meal and during snack time. Camp staff remains vigilant of those children who have food allergies to make sure that they do not come in contact with any allergy-inducing foods.

## Safety Precautions

Camp Felix maintains well-planned safety guidelines and emergency procedures which are reviewed and revised each year. A detailed safety plan is submitted to the Putnam County Department of Health on an annual basis. A copy of this safety plan can be requested by contacting Camp Felix admin staff. All camp staff members are trained in these safety procedures and are regularly reminded that they are all “Injury Prevention Specialists” at camp. At the beginning of each session, all campers go through orientation to learn about all necessary safety precautions and emergency procedures. The Camp Felix Health Director is a Registered Nurse and has all appropriate CPR and First Aid certifications. In addition, the Camp Felix Director, all Aquatics Staff, and other select staff members at camp are certified in First Aid and responding to emergencies, as well as CPR.



## Cleanliness and Maintenance of the Camp Grounds

Camp Felix staff work very hard to ensure that the camp grounds, including all cabins, dining hall, showers, bathrooms, and pool, are in the best condition possible. We have two cleaning/maintenance people on staff who to ensure that the campsite is clean and well maintained. Regular inspections are conducted by Camp Felix admin staff and the Department of Health to ensure that the camp grounds are safe, clean, and in good working order. During camp, there are a number of strategies that are employed to ensure that everything remains clean. For example, each morning, campers clean up their own cabin as they compete for the “Golden Dustpan” award. This helps campers learn essential cleaning and self-care skills that we hope they will employ at home too.

## After Camp Ends

### Saying Good-Bye

Our campers often refer to camp as a “family” and we do our best to make them feel “at home” while they’re at camp. Staff members serve as role models and mentors to the children. For this reason, children may often feel sad when saying good-bye to their Camp Felix family. Below are several suggestions for how campers can stay in touch during the school year:

- Write letters or emails to their friends. Addresses can be requested from Camp Felix admin staff.
- Write letters or emails to staff members with whom they may have bonded (their counselors or dance instructors, etc). All staff mail should be sent to (we will forward to the staff): Jane Feyder-Siegel at 590 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011
- Attend the annual **Camp Felix Reunion** held every January! Invitations are sent out in November to all staff and campers.

## **Lost and Found**

Each week, a significant amount of personal items is left behind at camp. All clothing items that are marked with the child's name will be mailed to the child's home or given to the parent during bus pick up. Clothing that is not marked will be sent to the New York Foundling office located at 590 Avenue of the Americas in Manhattan where it will remain with other lost-and-found items until October. Parents can call the office at 212-660-1321 to arrange pick up. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, all lost-and-found items will be discarded.

## **Camp Felix Contact Information**

### **Campamento Félix Información de contacto**

Jane Feyder-Siegel  
590 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 660-1321  
Cell: (646) 660-4849  
[Jane.Feyder@nyfoundling.org](mailto:Jane.Feyder@nyfoundling.org)

### **Camp location/address (Campamento de ubicación):**

Camp Felix  
197 Peekskill Hollow Road  
Putnam Valley, NY 10579

### **Phone policy:**

If you need to get in contact with your child during camp, please call Jane Feyder-Siegel at the number above. In order to prevent homesickness and fully engage campers in camp activities, we do not allow them to call home while in camp. Campers will be allowed to speak on the phone only in case of an emergency only. Camp staff will be sure to contact parents/guardians immediately if any issues arise with their child while at camp.

### **Política de Teléfono:**

Si necesita ponerse en contacto con su hijo durante el campamento, por favor llame a Jane Feyder-Siegel en el número anterior. Con el fin de evitar la nostalgia e involucrar plenamente a los campistas en las actividades del campamento, no permitimos que llamen a casa mientras que estén en el campamento. Los campistas se les permitirá hablar en el teléfono sólo en caso de una emergencia. El personal del campamento estará seguro de ponerse en contacto con los padres o tutores inmediatamente si surge cualquier problema con su hijo, mientras que estén en el campamento.



## **CAMP FELIX**

### **CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Camp Felix is committed to maintaining the physical and emotional safety and well-being of our campers as well as the community feeling of acceptance and understanding that pervades camp. The following code is an important part of that commitment.

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY OF CAMPERS AND STAFF**

The safety and health of our campers and staff is our highest priority. Any action or activity that jeopardizes this concern will not be tolerated. Campers are expected to stay safe while having fun, always following directions of the Camp Felix staff. Shoes must be worn at all times. We encourage the use of hats and sunscreen for protection from the sun. If no hat or sunscreen is brought to camp, Camp Felix will provide it.

Campers may never leave/separate from their group unless supervised by a staff member. Campers are required to stay within the boundaries of the campsite (basketball courts to rock climbing wall) and may never leave the camp site unless they are being picked up by parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian wishes to pick up the camper from the camp site at any time, they must notify Jane Feyder-Siegel, Program Director, at 646-660-4849 in advance.

#### **RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL**

Campers must respect other campers and staff at all times. Being respectful includes recognizing the uniqueness of each person's individual needs, concerns, and moods. Teasing, bullying, cyber-bullying, harassing, or other emotional or physical abuse, pranks, ethnic, gender, or sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment is not tolerated at Camp Felix.

#### **MEDICATIONS/DRUG/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/WEAPONS**

All medications prescribed by a doctor must be given to Camp Felix staff upon check-in at the bus. Medications must be in a prescription container, multiple medications should be in a ziplock bag with child's name on it. Medications will be handled by Camp Felix staff ONLY and administered by the Camp Nurse as prescribed.

Use of illegal or legal drugs for non-medicinal purposes without a doctor's prescription is prohibited at Camp Felix. Campers are strictly prohibited from processing or drinking alcoholic beverages of any kind. The possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, weapons, and/or drugs is grounds for immediate dismissal.

#### **GUEST AND VISITORS**

Due to COVID-19, there are no visitors allowed at Camp Felix this summer.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY ON THE BUS

Campers must arrive at the designated bus location by 8am on Monday morning of the assigned camp session. Camp Staff will assist campers in boarding the bus safely and finding a seat on the bus. Camp Staff will supervise all campers on the bus and tend to their needs. All campers must remain seated in their seat for the duration of the bus ride. Campers may NEVER get off/leave the bus until the buses reaches the camp destination. It is expected that both staff and campers conduct themselves in a respectful manner on the bus – no loud screaming, no throwing anything, no fighting, no getting up/out of the seat. Campers must listen to the Camp Staff while on the bus and follow their instructions.

## CARE OF PROPERTY AND FACILITIES

Camper must respect other people's personal property as well as the Camp Felix facilities and any camp supplies/materials. The camp environment should be protected and kept clean at all times. Any destructive behavior must be immediately brought to the attention of Camp Felix staff. Any misconduct or purposeful destruction of Camp Felix property will result in the **offender's family absorbing the financial responsibility of repair and replacement.**

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Camp should be a fun and enriching experience. Parents/guardians should review this Code of Conduct prior to the start of the program. Camp administration will review the Code of Conduct with the staff at staff training, and the staff will review the Code of Conduct with the campers on the first day of each camp session.

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## CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION CONSEQUENCES

Should any of the above Code of Conduct policies be violated, the following steps will be taken:

First offense: A quiet, verbal reprimand and conversation with Camp Felix staff member and Director.

Second offense: A verbal warning will be given to the camper and a phone call and/or email will be sent to the parent/guardian.

Third offense: The camper will be dismissed from camp. Parent/guardian and case planner/supervisor (if applicable) will be notified to arrange for camper's transport back home. A discussion will be held regarding camper's ability to return to camp in future camp seasons.

\*\*\*If the offense is severe (including, but not limited to fighting, theft, vandalism, possession of weapons, alcohol, cigarettes, or illegal substances, inappropriate language, severe verbal threats, physical aggression, leaving the designated area without permission, bullying, or sexual misconduct), the camper will be **IMMEDIATELY DISMISSED** from the camp session and any other camp session he/she is registered to attend in the future, bypassing all the steps above.

**\*\*THE ACTIONS TAKEN WILL BE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CAMP FELIX DIRECTOR\*\***



## Camp Felix Bus Information

### Camp Felix información del autobús

# Manhattan Manhattan

Bus pick-up/drop-off site

New York Foundling  
590 Ave. of the Americas  
New York, NY 10011  
6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between  
16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Streets

**Mondays:** The bus departs on the first day of each session promptly at 9:00am. **Please arrive no later than 8:00 am.**

**Fridays:** The bus returning from camp arrives on the last day of each session **between 3:00 and 5:00pm** (depending on traffic).

**Subway:** Take the F,V or L to 14<sup>th</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Sitio de dejar y recoger del autobús

New York Foundling  
590 Ave. of the Americas  
New York, NY 10011  
6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between  
16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Streets

**Lunes:** El autobús sale en el primer día de cada sesión a las 9:00am. **Favor de llegar antes de las 8:00 am.**

**Viernes:** El autobús llega desde el campamento en el último día de cada sesión **de 3:00-5:00pm** (dependiendo del tráfico).

**Metro:** Tome el F, V o L hasta la calle 14 y la 6 Avenida.



**Bronx**      **Bronx**

Bus pick-up/drop-off site

NYF Bronx Office  
501 Southern Blvd.  
Bronx, NY 10455  
Between Union Ave and  
Prospect Ave.

**Mondays:** The bus departs at 9:00 am. **Please arrive no later than 8:00 am.**

**Fridays:** The bus from camp arrives on the last day of each session **between 3:00 and 4:00pm** (depending on traffic).

**Subway:** Take the 6 train to E 149th St.

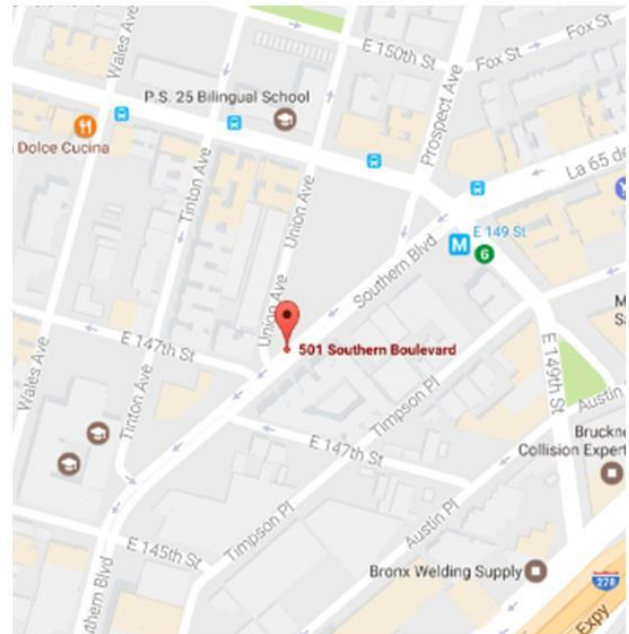
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**Viernes:** El autobús llega desde el campamento en el último día de cada sesión **de 3:00-4:00pm** (dependiendo del tráfico).

Metro: Tome el tren 6 a la E 149th St.



**\*\*Please arrive 30 minutes prior to departure and please be on time for pick-up.\*\***

**\*\* Por favor, llegue 30 minutos antes de la salida y por favor, llegar a tiempo a recoger.\*\***



## What to Bring to Camp

There is no laundry opportunity for campers so campers should bring enough clothing for five days. Children should not bring new clothing. All clothing should be marked with the camper's name.

### Suggested items to bring:

- 5-7 t-shirts
- 5 pairs of shorts
- 2 or 3 sweatshirts or long sleeve shirts
- 1 or 2 pairs of long pants
- 1 or 2 pairs of pajamas
- 5 days-worth of socks and underwear
- 1 warm jacket (fleece or heavy sweater)
- 1-2 pairs of comfortable shoes (sneakers preferably)
- 1 pair of flip flops or rubber sandals for pool
- 1-2 bathing suits
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and other toiletries as needed (deodorant, lotion, etc)
- Sun hat
- Water bottle
- 2 Towels
- **2-3 Face Masks**
- **MEDICATION – MUST BRING THIS TO CAMP!**

Optional Items to bring (*these items will be provided for each camper by the camp*):

- Rain-coat/rain boots
- Sleeping bag or sheets, pillow and pillowcase
- Sunscreen that has an SPF of 15 or higher
- Insect repellant

### WHAT NOT TO BRING:

*These items will be taken by camp staff if they are found, and will be held by the camp director until the end of camp:*

- Knife, ax or other dangerous item or weapon
- Fireworks
- Jewelry
- Food
- Chewing gum or candy
- Money
- iPod, MP3player, music player of any kind
- Cell phone
- Video games

## Campamento sugerida lista de Empaque

*No hay oportunidad de lavandería para los campistas así que los campistas deben llevar ropa suficiente para cinco días.*

*Los niños no deben traer ropa nueva. Toda la ropa debe estar marcada con el nombre del campista.*

### Artículos sugeridos para traer:

- Camisetas, sudaderas, pantalones cortos, o uno o dos pares de pantalones largos
- Pijamas
- 5 días-valor de calcetines y ropa interior
- Una campera de abrigo (polar o jersey grueso)
- Dos pares de zapatos cómodos (zapatillas)
- Gorro
- Traje de baño
- 2 Toallas
- Cepillo de dientes, pasta dental, jabón, champú
- botella de agua
- 2-3 Mascarillas Facial (COVID)
- **Medicamentos (MUY IMPORTANTE!)**

Opcional (tenemos para cada niño):

- La gaceta de lluvia
- Protector solar que tenga un SPF de 15 o superior
- Bolsa de dormir o sábanas, almohada y funda de almohada (opcional)
- Repelente de insectos (opcional)

### LO QUE NO DEBE LLEVAR:

- Cuchillo, una hacha o otro elemento peligroso o arma
- Fuegos artificiales
- Joyería
- Goma de mascar o un dulces
- Dinero
- Ipod, MP3 player
- Teléfono Celular
- Video o Computadora

*Estos elementos serán tomados por el personal del campamento si se encuentran, y se llevará a cabo por el director del campamento hasta el final del campamento.*

## SICK CAMPER POLICY

If child has a **fever, runny nose, cough, rash, red eyes**, or any other symptoms of illness, especially symptoms of COVID-19, please DO NOT send the child to camp!

If a camper is sick upon arrival at camp or becomes sick during camp and cannot stay a camp due to inability to participate in activities or being contagious, they will be sent home.

Parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the camper. If the parent/guardian is unable to pick up the camper at camp, camper will be brought to Bronx office and parent must pick up there. For COVID-19 positive cases, see detailed camper plan in our Camp Felix COVID guide.

Child will be allowed to return to camp for subsequent weeks that they are registered for ONLY if child is 100% recovered (assuming COVID test is negative). A doctor's note might be required in cases of contagious illness, as well as proof of negative COVID test.

## CAMPER ATTENDANCE POLICY

Camp Felix 2021 Sessions are as follows:

Session 1: August 9<sup>th</sup> – August 13<sup>th</sup>

Session 2: August 16<sup>th</sup> – August 20<sup>th</sup>

Session 3: August 23<sup>rd</sup> – August 27<sup>th</sup>

At the time of registration, campers were able to request a **maximum of 2 sessions**. All campers are assigned to their 1<sup>st</sup> choice session (based on availability) and placed on waiting list for their 2<sup>nd</sup> choice. Campers will be notified if their second choice has an opening as it gets closer to camp start date. Once confirmed, campers must arrive at the designated bus location on Monday morning at 8am on the day that the assigned session begins.

If the camper is no longer able to attend the assigned session, please notify Jane Feyder-Siegel by phone or text at **646-660-4849 as early as possible**. All efforts will be made to reschedule the camper, but this is based on availability and not guaranteed.

Campers who are do not show up for the bus and do not notify Jane Feyder-Siegel at all will forfeit registration for any future sessions.

## 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?

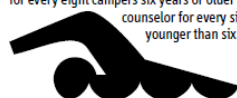
### Are campers always supervised while in the water?

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.



- 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.



State of New York  
George E. Pataki, Governor  
Department of Health

Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr.P.H., Commissioner

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 nonswimmers 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."

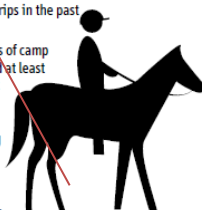
## Camp Trips

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

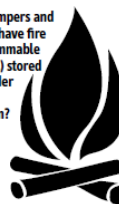
How are activities in craft shops supervised, especially when campers are using dangerous tools, such as power saws and lathes? Are archery and rifle ranges at a safe distance from activity centers? Are spectators protected at baseball fields and similar areas? Do players wear protective equipment?

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

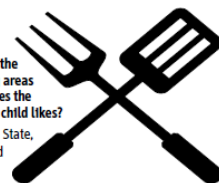
Are barriers erected against such natural hazards as cliffs and swamps? Are foot trails located away from such dangerous areas and from heavily traveled roads and highways? Do the camp facilities (bunks, bathrooms, mess hall, recreation facilities) meet your aesthetic tastes and those of your child? 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.



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

## 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 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;

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.



# Children's Camps in New York State

