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Camper and Parent Handbook

Welcome to Camp Idyllwild! We developed this little handbook to provide you and your child(ren) with important information in preparation for their time with us, and to answer any questions you may have about camp. As always, please feel free to call or email us at any time with your questions, concerns or suggestions. We want to work together with campers and families to make your experience with Camp Idyllwild a magical one!

The boxed information below is what we consider to be most important, so we put it up front. However it is very important to read this entire handbook, and go over it with your children.



- 1. To keep our camp a safe, fun and special place for everyone, we ask that parents review the camp rules in this handbook with their children and ensure that they understand them. Obedience with the rules and respect for others at camp is expected of all campers, and critical to the mission of Camp Idyllwild.**
- 2. All children must have sufficient sunscreen applied before they get on the bus in the morning, and bring a bottle with them for re-application during the day. Hats and sunblock shirts are a superb additional sun protection measure and highly recommended.**
- 3. All children must bring a substantial lunch (see lunch guidelines) with an ice pack or frozen drink to keep it cool as we do not provide refrigeration at camp. Lunch is at 11:30 am and we provide one snack at 3:00 pm, so children should eat a good breakfast before they get on the bus.**
- 4. Parents must review the bus rules in this handbook with their children before camp. Riding the bus is a privilege and being rowdy or disobeying the driver and counselors can result in loss of that privilege.**
- 5. All children must bring a re-usable water bottle to camp, filled with ice and water. We provide water to re-fill the bottles throughout the day. Parents should discuss the importance of proper hydration during the day and encourage children to drink plenty of water (we also remind them of this at camp).**
- 6. We recommend children wear their swimwear to camp with t-shirt and shorts on top. Spare clothing and socks are highly recommended. Wet feet + tennis shoes = blisters, so please wear socks with tennis shoes and bring an extra dry pair!**
- 7. All children must bring a pair of closed-toe water shoes for creek play and creek hikes. Children are not allowed to be barefoot in the creek or anywhere on camp property.**
- 8. Children are strongly encouraged to get plenty of sleep (at least 8 to 10 hours depending on age) each night during their week(s) at camp. Being active outdoors requires a lot of energy!**

About Camp Idyllwild

Camp Idyllwild is a summer day camp focused on reconnecting children with nature and encouraging love and respect for the outdoors and the natural environment. Camp takes place on 30 beautiful rural acres in the “backyard of Music City” just about 30 scenic miles south of the west Franklin / Leiper’s Fork area. Our property is a natural playground full of wooded trails to explore and is surrounded by a pristine creek chock full of wildlife, and opportunity for non-stop fun! Our expertise is in nature, ecology, the environment, and science and our programs focus on this. We try to regularly update our website with information about our activities, guest speakers, expert collaborators, staff, and new photos, so be sure to periodically check out our site: www.campidyllwild.com

About our Staff

Eric Ward is Camp Idyllwild’s hands-on camp director – you’ll see Eric out and about with the counselors and kids, leading hikes, facilitating tree climbs, and doing maintenance work if necessary! Eric is a trained scientist and naturalist, and is always available to parents, campers and staff for any need or question they might have. Feel free to contact him any time day or night (except perhaps in the middle of the night!).

Our camper groups are lead by highly qualified adult counselors who are trained in adult and child CPR and basic first aid. In addition all counselors have undergone background checks and training on camp safety, risk management, procedures, and activities. Our counselors are screened to ensure they have the right experience and qualifications to be positive role models for children.

Communication

At Camp Idyllwild, we welcome the opportunity to talk with parents and get to know our camper families better. We feel that being partners with parents is the best way to make camp the most positive experience possible. Eric Ward, the Director and co-owner and Suzanne Ward, co-owner of Camp Idyllwild are always available should you wish to speak directly with them.

Safety

The health and safety of each camper is the primary concern of the staff at Camp Idyllwild. We take your child’s health and safety very seriously, which is why we ask you to help us by informing us of any medical or dietary issues your child may have, and to provide written permission to administer medication if needed. Our adult to child ratio is between 1:5 and 1:10 depending on the number of children attending each week, allowing us to ensure camper safety at all times. General safety information, including how to avoid injury will be reviewed with campers on the first day of camp. The camp Director and all Staff are CPR and Basic First Aid trained through the American Red Cross.

Absences

Please help us out by informing us if your child will be absent from camp at least one day prior to the absence if possible. Since last minute illnesses are difficult to predict, a parent or caretaker should inform the camp by phone no later than 7:30 am on the day the camper will be absent. This allows us to inform the bus driver, so the bus will not wait unnecessarily and delay arrival at camp. If a camper is absent without a prior call or note from you, we will contact you to check on the unexpected absence. There are no refunds for days of camp missed.

Illness

Whenever a camper is not feeling well and wishes to speak to his or her parent, we permit the camper to call. Often, just a few comforting words from Mom or Dad are all that is needed for the camper to bounce back and continue to participate at camp.

Parents are also called whenever a camper is not feeling well enough to participate in activities beyond resting for one activity period. Parents may choose to pick up their child at any time, or allow their child to rest in the camp health center.

If your camper has a cold, but is well enough to be outside with others, you may send him or her to camp, but please inform us of your camper's condition. Campers may not attend camp if they have certain contagious illnesses, including but not limited to chicken pox, bacterial meningitis, diarrhea, hepatitis A, measles, mumps, rubella, or influenza, and must have a doctor's permission to return to camp.

Injury

Whenever a child is injured and requires professional medical attention, parents will be notified immediately and asked if they want to either take their child to their own doctor or meet our staff at the office of the local health center in Centerville.

For minor first aid treatment provided by our staff that goes beyond applying a band-aid, cold compress, or similar treatment, a staff member will contact the parent at the end of the day. Because minor cuts or wounds are a risk during outdoor play in a natural environment, we require your child be up to date on their tetanus shots.

Contact Information

We can take phone calls at camp from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm during the camp season. Please contact us at 615-541-9453. If you leave a message (if for some reason we can't get to the phone at that moment) we will call you right back as soon as we can. If you call after camp hours, we have voice mail that will be checked first thing in the morning. We are only able to check email infrequently throughout the day, so please call if your message is urgent. Our email is: campidyllwild@gmail.com

General Camp Rules for Campers

Please review these rules with your child, and be sure they understand them:

- Be considerate of others in what you say and do. Cooperate with other campers and be supportive of one another.
- Pushing, hitting or teasing other campers is not allowed or tolerated.
- Follow the instructions and directions of the Staff.
- Stay with your camper group and do not wander off.
- Gum is a safety and environmental hazard and is not allowed at camp.
- Running with sticks, or throwing rocks, gravel or sand could be harmful and is not allowed.
- Tread lightly upon the earth - Be considerate of the environment by not littering, or harming living plants or critters.
- Do not drink water from the creek.
- Do not ever try to catch a snake. If you see a snake notify a counselor and then back away from it.
- Leave your shoes on at all times except when you will be replacing shoes with water shoes to play in the creek.
- We do not allow campers to bring guests to camp.
- Campers should dress to be outdoors all day and leave expensive clothing and jewelry at home.
- Do not bring extra items from home to show/trade. They can be easily lost.
- Do not bring electronic games, music players, ipods, cell phones, or pagers to camp. These items, if brought, will be confiscated and returned to a parent at the end of the day.
- Firearms, dangerous weapons of any kind, pocket knives, illegal drugs, tobacco and alcohol are prohibited at camp and possession or use of any of the above items will result in immediate dismissal from camp.

Counselors will give a verbal warning to a camper who breaks a rule, followed by a short time out for a second infraction. If repeated infractions occur, a visit to the Director and/or a call to the camper's parent will take place.

Medication

Parents must give Camp Idyllwild written permission to administer prescription and non-prescription medication (such as aspirin, Tylenol, and cold medicine) to a camper. For Epipens, inhalers, and prescription medication, we will also need to have instructions and permission from a doctor. A Medication Information Form will be supplied if necessary for a child to be administered medication at camp. All medication is kept in the Health Center and will be administered to the camper as needed or directed.

Transportation

For safety, parents need to supervise their campers at the bus stop until they are checked in and on the bus. In order to provide the highest security and safety for your precious child(ren), we are implementing a parent-camper matching number security system. At the time of pick up, both child and parent will be assigned a matching number and the parent will be provided with a plastic tag corresponding to the number for the child. The parent responsible for picking up their child from the bus drop off location will be required to show the tag that matches their child(ren)'s in order to be allowed to pick them up. We request that you hang onto these tags for the duration of the week your child attends camp. If a parent has more than one child, the parent will be given a different numbered tag for each child. If another parent or caretaker will be dropping off or picking up your child, you can provide the tag to them, or provide them the number information on the tag so they can inform the bus driver the matching number information. In order to maintain the security feature of the system, ***we ask that all tags be returned to us on the last day of the camp week (very important!!)***.

In order for the camp staff (driver and counselors) to ensure that each child leaves with the correct parent or guardian, at the time of afternoon pick up all children will remain on the bus and parents must retrieve their children in an orderly fashion by providing the pick-up number; at this time the child(ren) will be allowed to exit the bus with their parent or guardian. Although this may take a bit longer than just letting all the kids exit the bus together, we feel this safer for the kids, so we appreciate your understanding and patience at pick up time. In the past we tried to do the tag checking and exit process while letting everyone off the bus at the same time and it was simply too chaotic!

At the time of registration parents can download the bus route information, which gives the precise bus route, and approximate times and locations for bus pick-up and drop-off. If for some reason you have trouble downloading this document you can email us at campidyllwild@gmail.com and we can send it to you. **Please be on time so as to not delay the bus getting to subsequent stops where parents and campers are waiting.** If your camper is going to be late to the morning bus or you will be late picking them up in the afternoon, you should contact us by phone ASAP so we can make arrangements for your camper. In most cases, if you are only a minute or two late we can wait, but otherwise you might have to drive them all the way to camp, so try to be on time!

The camp day begins as soon as a camper gets on the bus in the morning. Bus spirit is promoted by the counselors, who lead the group with songs, stories, or other activities. During the bus ride quiet games or books will be provided, or campers can just rest during the ride. Counselors will also review bus and camp rules and discuss with campers what they can expect from the week at camp on the first day.

Each camper is picked up and dropped off at the same location indicated in the registration process (unless prior arrangements are made in advance by contacting us). We take the safe transportation of our campers very seriously, and the consistency of using the same bus stop is the only way we can ensure that each camper is brought safely to camp and home again each day.

The bus stop a camper uses is based on the preference selected on the registration form and based on overall demand for each area location. We aim to be flexible, but changes in the middle of a camp session may not be possible, however please contact us to discuss it. Please call the office at least 1 week before your child's session if you wish to change your child's pick up area after you have registered for camp.



General Bus Rules

Following the bus rules is critical to the safety of all campers during the bus ride to and from camp. We appreciate you reviewing these rules with your child, and letting them know that too many infractions could lead to them losing the privilege of riding the bus:

- Remain seated and facing the front of the bus at all times during the ride.
- Keep your hands to yourself and be respectful to others.
- Use considerate language.
- Use low (“inside”) voices in the bus.
- Follow the staff’s instructions.
- Do not write on seats or damage the bus in any way.

After the Camp Day

Being outside is a wonderful and healthy way to spend the summer, but there are some common nuisances that come with spending time in the wilderness. One of these is exposure to various arthropods such as spiders, mosquitoes, chiggers and ticks. Because ticks can sometimes come home with your child (yuck!), we recommend that you inspect them for ticks when they come home, and remove them. Simply extracting them using a pair of metal tweezers is the best way to do that if necessary (place tweezers as close to the head as possible, grasp firmly, and slightly wriggle it out).

Camp also takes a lot of energy, and getting enough sleep is essential to having the stamina required to participate in a full camp day. Being tired and cranky makes it hard to enjoy all that Camp Idyllwild has to offer! We recommend the following amounts of sleep needed Sunday through Thursday:

- Children ages 6 years and younger: 10 or more hours/camp night
- Children ages 7-11 years old: 8 - 10 hours/camp night



What to Bring to Camp

- Lunch and beverage in a soft insulated reusable lunch bag or box with an ice pack
- Reusable/refillable water bottle with ice and water inside
- Towel
- Swimsuit
- Well-fitting closed-toe water shoes (not Crocs[®], as these tend to fall off and will float down the creek!)
- A hat for protection from the sun
- Sunscreen and Bug spray
- One extra change of clothes
- Reusable plastic bag to put wet/dirty items in
- Day pack or tote to carry the above items

Please label all items with your child's name!

What NOT to Bring to Camp

- Anything electronic: iPods, cell phones, video games, CD players
- Candy or gum
- Expensive watches or jewelry
- Sports equipment
- Toys or stuffed animals
- Trading cards
- Pets or any other living animal
- Anything else not mentioned in "What to Bring to Camp"

Camp Idyllwild accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage of any of these "contraband" items.

Campers will have a great time just bringing themselves!

What to Wear to Camp

Swimsuit, t-Shirt and shorts or pants/capris (preferably old clothing that can get dirty – kids LOVE dirt and we really rough it and get “one with nature” here at Camp Idyllwild!). We recommend children wear their swim suit to camp with clothing on top. Clothing needs to be modest and appropriate for camp. The fit should be neither too loose nor too tight for normal participation in camp activities. If your child is prone to sunburn, we recommend they wear UV protective water shirts (such as a rashguard).

Sturdy tennis shoes or closed toe amphibious shoes (good for hiking and water play). No open toed sandals or Crocs please (Crocs are not supportive enough, and tend fall off in the water and float away down the creek!). Children should bring a pair of closed-toe water shoes (like aqua socks) if they plan on creek exploring (and who isn't planning to do this!). All children should wear or bring tennis shoes for non-water activities, and wear and bring extra socks. Wet feet + tennis shoes = blisters! We cannot over-emphasize the need for an extra pair of dry socks!

No personal items, including watches or jewelry, other than the above. **Help us to return your camper's belongings by clearly marking all personal items with the camper's first and last name.**

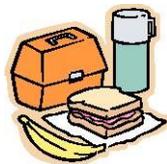
Lunch Guidelines

At Camp Idyllwild we promote wholesome eating, and therefore we recommend parents keep the lunches nutritious and free of “junk” foods. Include enough lunch so that your child has something extra for a mid-morning snack if they want (although we will also have snacks available for our afternoon snack break around 3 pm). Natural juices or water in containers can be frozen the night before and put in the lunch to keep food cool as it defrosts, or cold packs can be added to the lunch box. Camp Idyllwild does not have adequate refrigeration space to accommodate all camper lunches, although we do have an air conditioned location to store lunches, so we highly recommend including an ice pack of some sort.

We practice sustainable living at Camp Idyllwild, and encourage campers to bring their lunches in reusable containers. After each meal we put recyclable materials in the recycling container, vegetarian food waste in the compost bin, and landfill waste in a garbage can. In order to minimize landfill waste, we recommend sending your child’s lunch in reusable or recyclable containers and bags.

The following safety procedures have been developed to prevent any possible contamination of food brought to camp by campers. If parents adhere to these basic food safety rules we can avoid potential cases of food poisoning:

- Do not send perishable food items (cream based products and egg products besides hard boiled eggs.)
- If you send any semi-perishable food products (meats, cheeses, mayonnaise, etc.) you need to freeze your camper's beverage or water bottle and place it next to the semi-perishable food or freeze the food product or use a frozen cold pack or two.
- Small insulated containers and non-breakable thermoses (small) may be used for semi-perishable foods.
- Please alert the camp to any special dietary needs your child has.



Snack Time

At Camp Idyllwild, one of our goals is to provide children with wholesome food, free of preservatives, artificial colors, artificial flavors, additives, high-fructose corn syrup, and partially hydrogenated oils. Therefore we carefully select snacks to be as close to whole as possible. Options for snacks may include fresh fruit, granola, dried fruit, or all natural or organic packaged food (including treats!). We love snacks too, but we try to make them as healthy as possible because that is what we want for our own children. Some campers may have snacks of their own making (home-made ice cream, yum!) if they choose to participate in the “cooking” activities. We strive to reduce the amount of waste we produce and therefore try to obtain food in bulk rather than over-packaged and individually packaged items as much as possible. At least one snack in the afternoon is always provided. Children are encouraged to eat a good breakfast and bring an extra snack from home, packaged in their lunch if they want one in the morning.

Rainy Days

On rainy days, for the most part, camp activities take place as normal (we don't let a little summer shower stop our fun!). We have covered pavilions under which activities can take place. In addition, arts & crafts, pottery, wood working, music activities, and other crafts and games can take place in one of our two indoor locations, the Nature Center or the Workshop. If thunderstorms threaten us, or if lightning is sighted, we move indoors for safety.

If rain is predicted you might consider sending your child with a rain poncho or raincoat and rain boots or old tennis shoes – kids love to play in the rain! But please no umbrellas!

Over Night Sessions (Stargazer Sleepovers)

If your child is signed up for one of our two overnight camp outs, they will need to bring a sleeping bag, pillow, toothbrush/ toothpaste, and change of clothing to tent camp with us – tents, food, and flashlights/ lanterns will be provided by us. Younger campers who are attending a sleepover with a parent are welcome to camp together. We provide tents, cots and food, but you are welcome to bring your own tent if you wish. Parents will need to bring their own personal items and plan to arrive to camp at 4:00 pm on the Friday of the sleepover.

Campers overnighting without parents will need to be picked up at camp at or before 12:00 noon on the Saturday after the campout.

