

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS**

We are excited that your camper will be joining us this summer at Big Sandy Camp! This parent guide contains information that you need to know to prepare your child for summer camp. Please feel free to contact us in the camp office during our regular office hours if you have any questions or concerns.

Summer Office Hours: Sunday - Friday 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Phone: 218-426-3389

Email: [office@bigsandycamp.org](mailto:office@bigsandycamp.org)

## **What time is Check-In?**

Check-In runs from 4:00 – 5:00 PM on the first day of camp. Staff will meet you as you come in to give you further directions on where to go! If you need to make a payment, or drop off mail for your camper, please stop in the office. If you do not think you will make it to the camp by the end of check-in, please notify the camp office.

## **What time is Check-Out?**

The closing rally will begin at 9:00am on the last day of camp. Parents are welcome to attend this rally, and campers will be ready for pick-up around 9:30 am. Please remember to bring a photo ID for pick up. Campers will only be released to someone listed on their account as an approved person to pick up the child. If you are not personally picking up your child at camp, make sure that you have listed the person picking up your child on your child's record. We will not release your child to someone not listed on their record as an approved pick up person. Parents who are picking up their own child must also be listed on their camper's record.

## **When is the balance due on my camper's account?**

Your balance is due 2 weeks prior to your camp session. Payments can be made on your UltraCamp account. If you need assistance, please contact our camp office. If you need to cancel your reservation, a portion of your fee is non-refundable.

## **How do I access my UltraCamp account?**

We get a lot of emails and phone calls from parents with questions concerning their family accounts. One of the best things you can do is get familiar with how to use your UltraCamp account. Keep track of your username and password as that will get you into your account. If you forget your username and password, give our camp office a call and we can help you.

## **What does my child need to pack for camp?**

Bringing what your child needs can help to ensure a good camp experience. Remember to mark all clothing and gear with the camper's name using name tags or permanent ink. Keep in mind that no laundry service is available. Of course, in emergency situations, cabin leaders are happy to wash sleeping bags or other clothing. All clothes and a bag for dirty laundry should be labeled with the camper's name and phone number. When it comes to clothing, pack items that are modest. To us this means that swimwear adequately covers a camper's body, pants stay up, and we don't see their underwear. All girls should pack a one-piece swimsuit or modest tankini since most camp water activities are very active. Clothing that advertises alcohol or tobacco products is not allowed. If you don't think something will be right for camp, you should leave it at home. Be sure to pack typical camp clothes - the kind you could afford to lose and don't mind getting really dirty! Due to the active nature of camp, all campers must have at least one pair of athletic/tennis shoes.

## **Suggested Packing List**

- Bedding: pillow, sleeping bag and/or twin-size bedding
- Towel, beach towel, shampoo, toothbrush, soap, etc.
- Tennis shoes and sandals
- Clothes for both warm and cool weather – Be careful with the clothes you pack. Leave inappropriate clothing at home (t-shirts with inappropriate printing, low cut and midriff-baring tops, and the like).
- Pajamas
- One piece swimsuit or a modest two-piece swimsuit that covers the entire midriff
- Plastic bag for dirty or wet clothes to bring home
- Missions offering
- Bible, notebook, pens, or pencils
- Camper's medications in their original container, if needed
- Inexpensive camera
- Extra spending money for the Gift Shop, Snack Shop, and Craft Shop
- Bug spray and sunscreen
- Wallet or coin purse
- Flashlight
- Water bottle

## **Stuff to Leave at Home**

- Cell phones
- Personal music equipment
- Expensive, small items
- Alcohol, tobacco, or any non-prescription drugs
- Pocket knives or other weapons
- Fireworks
- Skateboards and rollerblades

## **What happens if my child loses something?**

Big Sandy Camp is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items brought by campers. However, items left behind are washed and inventoried on a weekly basis. We are happy to return items but do ask that you reimburse us for postage costs. The amount due will be charged before shipping the item. Lost and found items are only kept for two weeks and then discarded or donated to charities. To avoid lost items, mark all items with your child's full name with permanent ink. Any socks, undergarments, toiletries and wet or foul-smelling items will be discarded immediately.

## **Who will be in the cabin with my child?**

Cabin assignments are generally made one week before camp and are not released until check-in time. This enables us to grant most requests for cabin mates. If you make a change to your Roommate Request Form online 3-10 days before your camp session, please call our office. We cannot guarantee placement of any last minute request changes. It's important to us that each cabin group has a positive and accepting atmosphere. It's also important to us that campers become acquainted with other campers outside their current circle of friends and those individual campers feel comfortable and accepted even though they may not have come with someone they know. Friends who wish to be together should request each other. Friend requests are made through the registration process. Generally, there are 6-10 campers in each cabin. There will be at least one Counselor assigned to each cabin. There may be Leader-In-Training Counselors assigned to a cabin as well.

### **Should I send my child with spending money?**

Campers have the opportunity to spend money on a variety of items around camp. They can choose to buy snacks, ice cream or pop from the Snack Shop (\$1-\$5). The Gift Shop has many items such as sweatshirts, water bottles, blankets, and other various small gifts available (\$1-\$50). Campers are also able to purchase additional craft activities in the Craft Shop such as tie-dye (\$1-\$10)! An offering is also received each week. For each person, the amount of spending money brought will vary. Campers are encouraged to deposit most of their spending money in the camp store account. This helps keep their money safe and allows them to charge all purchases directly to their account. Campers should have a coin purse or wallet with their name on it for loose cash. On Thursday, all unspent money is returned to the camper as cash. Please DO NOT add any spending money to the camper's account after check-in on Sunday as it will not be credited to their spending account for the week.

### **How do you handle my child's health needs?**

We take every precaution to ensure the health and safety of each camper. Your child's health is our staff's main concern. Campers are welcome to see a nurse at any time. We want to keep campers healthy and happy, so they can have a great week of camp! Camp is not a fun place to be when you are sick. If a camper becomes ill, they will be monitored closely. If they are too uncomfortable to stay or have not improved in 24 hours, arrangements will be made for your child to return home. Should your child require off-camp care, every attempt will be made to contact you first.

#### **\* Medications**

All medications need to come to camp in their original packaging. All medication (prescriptions, vitamins, over the counter medications, etc) must be turned in to the nurse during check in and will be administered as scheduled. Medications will be returned to campers prior to departure. Bring an anaphylactic kit for severe allergies. If you have specific concerns or care instructions, please send those to us in writing.

#### **\* Special Dietary Needs**

Please alert us to any specific dietary needs so that they can be accommodated to the best of our ability. We are able to offer gluten-friendly meal options. Please note gluten-friendly differs from gluten-free. Gluten-friendly meals are prepared in areas that also prepare non-gluten free meals. For example: a gluten-free pizza is cooked in the same oven that cooks a non-gluten free pizza. The only gluten-free options will be individually wrapped products produced by a certified gluten-free company. These include muffins, cookies, and a few desserts. We can also provide a dairy-free meal option when necessary. We do not serve peanut or tree nut products, but some of our products may be manufactured in facilities that also process nuts. Our snack shop does have candy that contains nuts and peanuts. For all other allergies, please contact the camp kitchen in advance to discuss what options may be available. Guests have the option to bring their own food. Refrigerated space is available.

#### **\* Poison Ivy**

Let your campers know that poison ivy grows abundantly in our area. Help them learn to identify it and encourage them to stay on well-traveled paths. Campers should always wash well after being in areas of possible poison ivy contact or use an alcohol-based waterless hand sanitizer. This will neutralize the oils on the skin

#### **\* Severe Weather**

With summertime always comes the possibility of severe weather. Our directors monitor the weather constantly during any weather alerts. Counselors are trained in procedures of safety in case of severe weather.

## **How do I contact my camper during the week?**

### **\* Phones**

At Big Sandy Camp, campers are only permitted to make or receive phone calls in emergency situations. Campers will also not be allowed to keep cell phones. Parents are requested to call for campers only in the case of an emergency. After 3:30 PM, an answering machine will provide an emergency number. This after-hours phone is a limited use phone for emergencies only.

### **\* Visitors**

For the safety and security of all campers and staff, visitors are not allowed during the camp week.

### **\* Emails**

To send an email to your camper, please send your email to 'camper@bigsandycamp.org'. Emails will be printed each day and delivered to your camper at Mail Call after lunch. If an email is received after noon, it will be given to the camper the following day. Campers will not be able to respond to your emails and the office staff will not reply to emails directed to your camper. Keep your emails positive and encouraging as that will help keep your camper from feeling homesick!

### **\* Mail**

Campers love to receive letters while at camp. If you are sending mail, be sure to allow at least 3-4 days for the mail to arrive. If you leave mail for your camper in the office during check-in, it will be delivered to them throughout the week. Address your mail as follows...

Big Sandy Camp  
Camper's Name  
52511 185th Place  
McGregor, MN 55760

## **What happens if my child gets homesick?**

Preventing homesickness starts at home with you! Homesickness is an affliction that can affect a child's camping experience. Once at camp we do our best to help campers work through the feelings, but here are some suggestions that can make things easier for your child.

- Send your child with a good friend. Good supportive friends are a great prevention.
- Discuss what camp will be like. Talk about the fun activities, and the adventure of it all.
- Plan an overnight stay for your child before camp. This will help you evaluate if your child is ready for camp.
- Write them often while they are at camp. Keep your letters cheerful!
- If your child is significantly struggling with homesickness a staff member will call you to discuss the situation. We do not encourage homesick campers to call home without our staff first calling you to determine the best course of action.

## **How are the staff overseeing my child selected?**

All staff are chosen on the basis of their personal commitment to Jesus Christ, maturity, character, and love for kids. Staff attend a minimum of a week-long training session and are regularly evaluated. Interviews, references checks, and background checks are part of our hiring process. All of our staff members are First-Aid and CPR certified, as well as MinistrySafe certified.

## **Is Big Sandy Camp accredited?**

Big Sandy Camp is affiliated with the Christian & Missionary Alliance, but campers of all beliefs and denominations are welcome. Christ and a personal relationship with Him are the core beliefs communicated. Big Sandy Camp is accredited by CCCA, Christian Camp and Conference Association.