



# FAMILY GUIDE 2025

[WWW.GOLDENSLIPPERCAMP.ORG](http://WWW.GOLDENSLIPPERCAMP.ORG)

**G** GOLDEN SLIPPER  
**CAMP**



Jewish Federation  
of Greater Philadelphia





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[www.goldenslippercamp.org](http://www.goldenslippercamp.org)



# WELCOME!

Dear Campers and Families, At Golden Slipper Camp, we believe in the power of community, friendship, and personal growth.

Rooted in Jewish traditions and values, our goal is to continue to provide a safe, fun, and nurturing environment where campers can explore, learn, and create lifelong memories, as we have proudly done since 1948.

I am honored to oversee a dedicated, specialized, and carefully curated staff extremely passionate about creating a positive and inclusive community.

Throughout the summer, your child will have the chance to participate in many activities. Our aim is to provide a well-rounded experience that promotes personal growth, resilience, independence, self-confidence, and love and respect for all members of our community.

The attached Family Guide serves as the framework for our partnership and details who we are and what you can expect from GSC, as well as what GSC requires from campers and families to realize those expectations.

As the Director, my door is always open to campers and families. I encourage open communication and value your feedback. Please reach out to me with any questions, concerns, suggestions, or requests for more information.

Together, we will make this summer the best one yet! I am truly honored to be a part of this incredible community and look forward to serving you.

Friends, friends, friends, we will always be!

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### **SUMMER (mid June – August)**

Golden Slipper Camp  
164 Reeders Run Road  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360  
(570) 629 - 1654

### **WINTER (September – mid June)**

Golden Slipper Camp  
50 Monument Road, Suite 103  
Bala Cynwyd, PA  
(610) 660-0520

**Always available at [www.GoldenSlipperCamp.org](http://www.GoldenSlipperCamp.org)**

Open communication between camper families and staff is important for a successful summer experience for all. Office staff will take detailed messages, forward a message to the most qualified staff member to return your call, who will get back to you as soon as possible.

## STAFF CONTACT

Our amazing, year-round professional staff

Kristin Grapes – Enrollment Coordinator – [KGrapes@goldenslipper.org](mailto:KGrapes@goldenslipper.org)  
Jennifer Scarlata – Camp Administrator – [JScarlata@goldenslipper.org](mailto:JScarlata@goldenslipper.org)  
Sam and Zach Zeruth – Camp Caretakers

## CAMP TOURS

We typically offer tours during the offseason the first week, on a Saturday, in November and May. During the summer tours are available upon request. Please contact us to schedule.

**Want to experience a camp from your couch?**

Check out this video:

<https://youtu.be/tvY9BLismUE>

## **CAMP STAFF**

Every summer we have over a hundred counselors, junior counselors, and specialists come to our camp to help make each summer the summer of a lifetime.

Our senior administrators, head counselors and village leaders are all seasoned camping professionals. They oversee our general staff and provide incredible support to every facet of our operations.

Many of our staff have grown up at Golden Slipper Camp and have been trained in our Counselor in Training (CIT) program. All staff are interviewed and carefully screened by the Camp Director based on their enthusiasm, abilities, and experience. Cabin counselors are all high school graduates with most working towards a college degree in Education.

Activity Instructors are qualified professionals or skilled students who understand the special responsibilities involved with younger children.

We follow the ACA standard of approximately one staff member for every five campers. Campers are supervised in-person, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **STAFF TRAININGS**

All staff participate in a one week, pre-camp Orientation & Training program. In-service education is provided to staff throughout the summer. We are constantly coaching and supporting every member of our staff to always optimize and enhance our quality and consistency of supervision.

Our swim staff participate in Red Cross Lifeguard training on site.

## **AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION ACCREDITATION**

Golden Slipper Camp is a fully Accredited Camp of the American Camp Association and meet or surpass all required standards. For more information, please visit <https://www.acacamps.org/accreditation>

## **SECURITY AND PROTOCOL**

Our year-round staff, seasonal staff and consultants dedicate considerable time and resources to developing protocols and procedures to ensure the safety of our camp. All our staff are trained according to our incident response plans. For additional security: the grounds are blanketed with monitored cameras, a security guard on duty and multiple gated entries.

## **EMERGENCY WEATHER**

We have never had a severe weather emergency at camp, but we must be prepared. At camp during a weather emergency your child will be placed in a safe & secure environment out of harm's way. However unlikely, if it is determined that Golden Slipper Camp cannot operate and must close you would be notified by phone with the expectation that your child would be picked up from camp ASAP. This is a very unlikely scenario but one that must be addressed.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Improving and optimizing the health and wellness of our community is our top priority. It is vital that we receive detailed and accurate wellness and medical information about your child. Doing so allows our wellness and administration staff to deliver exceptional, around-the-clock attention and care to our community.

Our healthcare facilities are well equipped and staffed 24/7 with an expert medical team available for your child. We employ several full-time nurses, who are on staff at Golden Slipper Camp. We also certify all our summer staff in first aid, CPR, and the use of an AED. We call upon the services of a physician for minor injuries or illness, and in the unlikely event of a more serious condition, we are less than 10 miles from a hospital.

While your child is at Golden Slipper Camp, you can be assured that his or her safety is our priority. We take every precaution to ensure that the well-being of your child is paramount in every activity.

### **Some of the practices we follow include:**

- As an accredited camp through the American Camp Association (ACA), Golden Slipper Camp adheres to and often exceeds, ACA safety guidelines.
- We maintain a ratio of five campers to every counselor or staff member to create optimum conditions for both their physical and emotional safety.
- Each staff member is required to participate in a comprehensive training program to be prepared in case of an emergency, and more importantly, how to prevent an emergency.
- Established accident/ emergency procedures are practiced and put into place should the need arise.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION AND FORMS

GSC uses CampSite to store all medical information for your child. Your child will have their own individual portal that securely and handles the transmission of sensitive and confidential material.

Please take this opportunity in your CampSite portal to make us aware of any special health, learning, dietary, psychological, behavioral, or other special concerns that affect your child. The more details shared, the better we can serve your child's needs. We are your partners in caring for your child. This information allows us to be well prepared and serve your child's needs, making them feel at home while away at GSC. All information remains confidential amongst necessary and appropriate administrators and wellness professionals.

### **MEDICATIONS**

- All medications (prescriptions and over the counter) must be given to one of our nurses on departure day. For the safety of everyone, all medications will be stored in the Wellness Center and administered only within the presence of a member of our medical team.
  - Campers are NOT permitted to store or carry any medications (both prescription and non-prescription). A limited number of over-the-counter medications can be provided to campers under the standing orders provided by our local physician.
  - On departure day, camp nurses will be available to review any special concerns relating to individual medications and medical forms.
- All medications of any type must be clearly labeled with your child's name, the Physician's name, the name of the medication, and the required dosage.
- All medications must be in their original container/package and listed on the Medical Form, which must be signed by your Physician.

- Our policy is not to give any child drugs or medication unless prescribed by a licensed Physician. This includes over-the-counter medications, vitamins, supplements, and herbal remedies.

**Please be prepared to provide the following required information:**

- Any allergies, diet and activity restrictions or other special concerns your child may have.
- Proof of current (or effective) tetanus inoculation. Consult your physician to determine whether your child's last inoculation is still effective and indicate so on the medical form.
- Please ensure that any required booster shots occur prior to the summer.
- Immunization, physical (certified by a doctor) and Health History forms completed.
- Details of any medical or therapeutic treatment for any physical or emotional problems, or any personal or family concerns which your child is experiencing.

## **INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE COVERAGE**

You must upload a copy of your child's insurance AND prescription card in CampSite.

## **IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

The health, safety and wellbeing of our entire camp community is extremely important and is our top priority. In line with the recommendations for standard of care by practicing pediatricians across the country and with Center for Disease Control (CDC), GSC requires the age-appropriate routine vaccination of all campers, staff, and employees.

**The following immunizations are required by 28 PA. CODE CH 23.81:**

- Four doses of tetanus (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday), usually given as DTP, DTaP, DT, or Td
- Four doses of diphtheria (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday), usually given as DTP, DTaP, DT, or Td
- Three doses of polio vaccine – oral (OPV) or injectable (IPV)
- Two doses of measles and mumps and one of rubella (MMR) vaccine – one after 12 months of age and second doses of measles, mumps vaccine (preferably given as MMR)
- Three doses of hepatitis B vaccine – the first two doses given one month apart, and the third dose six months after the first dose
- Two doses of varicella vaccine (chicken pox), the first dose administered at 12 months of age or older, or history of disease documented in writing by a parent, guardian, or physician

**For children entering Grade 7 or older:**

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) (if 5 years has elapsed since last tetanus)
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)

**Not required, but strongly recommended:**

- The administration of the Hepatitis A vaccine according to the standard AAP/CDC vaccine schedule. Please consult with your doctor about the recommended AAP/CDC schedule for the Hepatitis A vaccine.
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- All campers and staff receive flu vaccine
- COVID-19 vaccine

**Exemptions:**

- We understand that some may be medically unable to receive certain vaccinations. We will require documentation from a physician to exempt the individual before the summer program.
- Individuals that do not vaccinate due to religious beliefs must provide written documentation.

- Individuals currently part of the GSC program may be grandfathered into this policy.

*BE ADVISED, individuals with exemptions may be excluded from the camp program, at the direction of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, in the unlikely occurrence an outbreak of a non-immunized disease occurs.*

## CONSENT TO TREAT YOUR CHILD IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY

By sending your child to Golden Slipper Camp, you are giving permission for our medical personnel to decide about your child's health. In the event your child becomes seriously ill or injured, the camp will make every effort to notify you immediately. We have available: camp vehicles, a local Urgent Care and St. Luke's Hospital, which is a 24-hour call to attend to our campers.

Our policy is to contact you if your child:

- Becomes ill and must stay overnight in the Wellness Center;
- Is put on a prescription medication;
- Must go to the hospital for tests and/or x-rays;
- Must visit a dentist / orthodontist or other medical specialist;
- Is seriously ill or injured and requires hospitalization; OR
- Has visited Wellness Center 5 times in a session for any reason

GSC must always be able to reach you throughout your child's stay. It is vital that you provide us with accurate and up to date contact information. It may become necessary to send your child home for a brief time if, in our medical staff's opinion, additional or long-term care is required. Please immediately send any updates to your contact information to the camp office. If you are concerned about any aspects of your child's health, please feel free to call the camp office.

## HEALTH CONDITIONS THAT REQUIRE REMOVAL FROM CAMPER POPULATION

Please do not send any child to camp with a fever, severe cough or cold, a communicable disease or head lice. We reserve the right to temporarily send home any child who comes to camp with any contagious condition or illness. Campers will be sent home from camp for any of the following conditions:

- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye);
- Any communicable disease such as chicken pox, impetigo, etc.;
- Medication non-compliant for more than 3 days;
- Severe Injuries;
- Persistent high fevers (not responding to medication);
- Medical personnel will be responsible to notify the Dept. of Health regarding communicable diseases;
- Persistent bed wetting – pullups are not an option;
- Severe lice contamination; AND any other illness, or injury as deemed by the RN or Director.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROTOCOLS

- **Doctor and Hospital Visits:** If the Health Center staff feels that your child must be seen by a doctor or at the hospital, your child will be transported to a nearby hospital or urgent care center.
- **Dental and Orthodontic Appointments:** Should your child unexpectedly need dental/orthodontia work, you will be contacted immediately. You may pick up your child from camp and take him/her to the orthodontist at home, or we will make an appointment for your child with a local practitioner, if possible.
- **Allergy shots:** If your child requires allergy shots while in camp, please leave an ample supply of medication and syringes with the nurses on departure day. Our medical staff will be available to administer shots as needed



- **Medic-Alert Bracelet:** Children who react to specific antibiotics or medications, or who have specific medical ailments, should wear a Medic-Alert bracelet, which can be obtained through the Medic-Alert foundation in your city. If your child falls into this category and does not already have one, please arrange for one prior to camp
- **Glasses/Contact Lenses:** Children who wear glasses and/or contact lenses should bring an extra pair to camp, in case of breakage or loss. Please be sure to clearly label all frames and contact lens cases.
- **Head Lice:** Every camper will have a mandatory head check for lice prior to boarding the buses. Campers being driven to camp must report to the Wellness Center for a head check before going to their assigned bunk. Parents must remain with the camper until the head check is done. 48 hours after the start of camp, there will be a second mandatory head check of all campers and staff. Village leaders will organize a system to have lice checks done in the village during rest period. Any questionable campers will be sent to the Wellness Center for confirmation. If a camper is found to have nits/lice at this check, s/he will be:
  - a. Treated with an FDA approved Louse Buster at the Wellness Center
  - b. Parents will be billed for any treatment that is not covered by insurance



## PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR CAMP

When preparing your child for camp, it is paramount that they understand Camp's rules which govern camper behavior. Discussing the rules at camp and how they are expected to behave throughout the summer is a fantastic way to set your child up for a successful camping experience.

### PROHIBITED ITEMS AND BEHAVIORS

1. No fireworks (this includes sparklers, smoke bombs, etc.); weapons or firearms are permitted in camp
2. Campers are not permitted to leave camp property except with a staff member for medical treatment.
3. Campers are not allowed to possess cell phones, or any other electronic equipment with cell phone service or access to the internet.
4. Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco items are strictly permitted. This includes e-cigarettes, vapes or any other electronic smoking device.
5. Campers are not allowed to take medications, supplements or vitamins unless distributed by our medical staff.

**ANY CAMPER, WHO IS DISCOVERED SMOKING, TAKING DRUGS, OR CONSUMING ALCOHOL IN VIOLATION OF THE ABOVE RULE, WILL BE IMMEDIATELY EXPELLED FROM CAMP. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS, AND THERE WILL BE NO REFUND OF FEES. LOCAL AUTHORITIES MAY ALSO NEED TO BE NOTIFIED.**

6. Violence and physical aggression (or threats of any kind). We expect every camper to interact appropriately and respectfully with all members of our camp community.
7. Campers must always use appropriate language.
8. Campers are expected to keep camp clean and free of any vandalism or graffiti.
9. We expect everyone to be in the right place at the right time (which includes informing a staff member if you must leave the group for any reason AND staying in your own cabin at night). In addition, all campers must participate fully in the camp program.

**THE CAMP DIRECTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DISMISS ANY CAMPER, WITHOUT REFUND, WHO WILLFULLY DISREGARDS THESE RULES, OR WHO ENDANGERS THE SAFETY OF HIMSELF/HERSELF OR OTHERS, DESTROYS CAMP PROPERTY OR THE PROPERTY OF ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE CAMP COMMUNITY, OR WHO OTHERWISE FAILS TO MEET THE CHARACTER AND INTEGRITY REQUIREMENTS OF GOLDEN SLIPPER CAMP.**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**At Golden Slipper Camp, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a zero-tolerance policy against all types of bullying.**

Bullying is when one or more people continually exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt another.

Unfortunately, persons who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their camp experience. Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously. We train staff to promote communication with each other and their respective campers. Both staff and campers should be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience and between camp seasons. Parents will be notified if their child is involved in a bullying situation. Every person has the right to expect to have the best possible experience at camp, and by working together as a team to identify and manage bullying, we can help ensure that all campers and staff have a great summer at Golden Slipper Camp.

## **DRESS CODE**

We require each camper to dress in a way that reflects respect for the camp's environment and meets acceptable standards of cleanliness, neatness, and modesty. We suggest that families and campers discuss levels of appropriateness before arriving at camp, and to remember that camp is a place where we play in the dirt, get wet, sweat, and play.

Please note that shirts or other clothing with inappropriate wording or graphics will not be permitted. This includes clothing that uses sexually explicit or profane language or promotes the use of alcohol, drugs, or smoking. Regarding bathing suits, shirts, skirts, shorts, etc., camp staff may ask a participant to change his/her clothing if deemed inappropriate.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONICS**

Campers are not allowed to have a cell phone at camp. We would appreciate the cooperation of parents/guardians with this policy. Any cell phones or electronics found at camp will be confiscated and placed in camp's safe until your child returns home. You will be notified if your child violates this protocol. We view the opportunity to disconnect as a gift for your children while at camp. Thank you for supporting this effort to simplify the camp experience and to build additional interpersonal skills.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

GSC does not assume responsibility for the loss or damage of items brought to camp. We return lost and found items regularly throughout the camp season. Please mark all your camper's belongings with his/her first and last name. All items left behind at the end of the camp season will be laundered and donated to a charitable organization.

## MONEY AND VALUABLES

Please do not send any items of high monetary or sentimental value to camp, including expensive jewelry, clothing, athletic equipment, or favorite belongings. All money is kept in a safe during each session. Each bunk has a party the last night of the session. We recommend \$5 be sent with your child to help pay for snacks, sodas, pizzas, or other food that the bunk may purchase.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET POLICY

The internet and social networking websites and apps allow campers to communicate with the public. It has also become a place where "cyber-bullying" can exist--children threatening and intimidating other children. Inappropriate internet behavior is dangerous and directly contradicts the camp's moral standards and mission. The guidelines below help ensure that all campers, staff, and parents remain safe and secure.

I agree to be respectful of the camp, its program, the campers, and its employees in all communications in my profile, blog, or other internet communications. I will not:

- Use obscenities, profanity, or vulgar language
- Engage in harassment, cyber-bullying, or intimidation
- Post comments that are derogatory regarding an individual person's race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability
- Engage in sexually explicit, suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments

Communication initiated by campers to staff is permissible. It is our policy that staff must ask families for permission to have camper "friends" and they must be kept on a limited profile setting, thereby blocking campers from staff members' personal content.

We ask that parents discuss the seriousness of inappropriate communications with their children. As an important first step, if a child has the option to make his or her profile private to strangers, that is highly suggested and should be done immediately. We also suggest that families monitor campers' cell phones, specifically text messages and other messaging applications.





## LIFE AT CAMP

### CABINS AND VILLAGES

Golden Slipper Camp accommodates children ages 7 to 15. We have created six villages that function as mini camps, with campers bunking in cabins with kids in their age group. Vogelson Village and Strauss Village are for boys and girls, ages 7 to 10 respectively. Kadden Village and Friends Village are for boys and girls 11 to 13. Council Boys Village and Council Girls Village are for teens, ages 14 and 15.

Each village has its own Village Leader, a trained supervisor with specialized knowledge of that age group. Clustering the kids in villages ensures that the groups are small enough to get personal attention, providing convenient access to a variety of age-appropriate programs and activities.

Golden Slipper campers sleep in spacious, well-ventilated cabins with plenty of windows and ample room for belongings. Each cabin has full bathroom facilities – sinks, toilets, and showers, with hot water, electricity, and round the clock supervision.

### BUNK PLACEMENTS

All camper placements are made by our camp Director and Head Counselors. Please note while we do our best to meet everyone's requests, mutual requests are prioritized. If we are not able to meet your request, a member of our team will be in touch to discuss why and go over any available options for your child. Your child will still be able to enjoy camp with any friends they have made over the years without having to live directly with them. Year-to-year bunks may look different, and we ask families to support their children by reinforcing that camp is a place for new and old friends to have fun.



## JEWISH LIFE AT GSC

Every day at Slipper we model and live out our camp's Foundational Jewish Values:

- Respect - *Kavod*
- Loving kindness - *Chesed*
- Repairing the world - *Tikkun Olam*
- Family - *Mishpacha*
- Friendship - *Chaverim*
- Community - *Kehillah*

Along with sportsmanship, teamwork, honesty, leadership and many others. These values are a set of beliefs and practices that transcend any singular religion. Our dynamic foundation of cultural and communal acceptance is highlighted in our diverse staff, campers, and alumni. Each morning starts with a communal gathering. At our flag raising ceremony, we take inventory of each member of our community and recognize the significant value each person adds to our camp family. We start each day meeting as a community at our flagpole. Here, we symbolically make sure everyone is accounted for, honor our nation, and frame our day through the lens of one of our core values.

While eating in the dining hall, we say the blessing in Hebrew and in English, helping our Jewish campers further cement their Jewish identity and exposing others to the Hebrew language. We also celebrate Shabbat each week with a special dinner time service for all on Friday evenings, and with a special schedule every Saturday which honors and sanctifies Shabbat through a schedule which is more relaxed and gives both campers and staff additional time to rest. Saturday evening includes service opportunities for multiple faiths and beliefs. Campers and staff are offered the opportunity to attend Jewish (Havdalah) service, Christian, and Non-Denominational services.

We also host some Jewish programming throughout the summer with a Rabbi hosting various activities like havdalah and shofar creation. Our Israeli staff, (*shlichim*: emissaries) usually host an Israeli or International Day (in conjunction with our other staff from around the world) and bring programming which fosters a deeper connection and relationship to the modern land of Israel. Together, we build our own unique community different from any other camp.

These relationships have kept the alumni and members beaming with GSC pride since 1948!



## CAMP PROGRAMMING

GSC offers a highly curated, diverse, and robust programming calendar. Each moment of your child's days and evenings will be filled with challenging and enriching programming designed to stimulate personal growth, sense of community and personal growth. Our daily schedules are designed to give each camper a set of core activities that they will enjoy with their bunkmates, as well as the chance to select "electives" based on their own individual interests. It is a perfect balance of everything GSC has to offer.

### DAYTIME

Campers will participate in the following daytime activities while they are at camp:

- **BUNK ACTIVITIES** - During the normal camp day, there are 3 bunk activities scheduled. Camp schedules these each week to ensure that campers get to experience all GSC has to offer and to ensure a day offers a variety of activities. When bunks go to these activities, they enjoy the instruction and leadership of the specialty staff. All campers are expected to participate, to the best of their ability, in all activities.
- **ELECTIVES - Activities chosen by campers on their own make up one period in the morning and another in the afternoon.** Campers are given a list of all electives, and they rank their top three choices. We strive to assign top choice electives for each camper for the upcoming week. Electives change weekly.
- **SWIM INSTRUCTION** – Mandatory instructional swim periods are run according to American Red Cross (ARC) standards. Campers are divided into groups at the first swim of their session and are given ongoing instruction to help them improve their skills, no matter the level. These groups are guided by qualified lifeguards and receive assistance from other counselors when needed.

### EVENING PROGRAMMING

Each day at GSC is capped off with an exciting evening program. Programs are all age appropriate and engage all campers and staff. Please check out a sample evening activity schedule in our reference section.

### CAMP-OUTS

Each cabin can camp under the stars during each camping session. Tents, sleeping bags, and all other supplies are provided so each camper can enjoy a true outdoor overnight experience.

## **RAINY DAYS**

We are always prepared for a rainy day. Many activity areas continue in the rain because they are adaptable to either indoor or outdoor venues. We have two large indoor recreation halls for group games. Many of our evening program activities are easily adaptable for rainy days. We always have a camp carnival, staff talent show, popular movie, or indoor activity program ready to go.

## **OLYMPICS**

Camp is split into four (4) teams assigned assorted colors that compete in both athletic and non-athletic activities. The Olympics are themed, with each team planning cheers, skits, and songs around their theme. Teams wear their colors and earn points for different conquests. At the end of the 3-day competition points are added up and the winning team celebrates by enjoying pizza and soda.

## **BAR AND BAT MITZVAH TUTORING**

We have several capable staff at camp who can assist your child in preparing for his/her upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Our staff members can be scheduled to meet with your son/daughter weekly (usually during rest period). Please send his/her materials to camp, including notes from the Rabbi or Cantor that would be helpful in utilizing the tutoring time most effectively. These sessions are to be used to review material your child has learned, not to teach new material.

## **BIRTHDAYS AT CAMP**

Every child celebrating a birthday at camp will receive recognition and lots of attention from the entire camp. The birthday girl or boy will receive a cake, which is shared by his/her bunk at lunch or dinner, and the whole camp will sing "Happy Birthday" to him/her. If you want to send special decorations or small gifts for the birthday camper, contact the camp office in advance.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

Our chefs prepare Kosher-style meals that are nutritious, plentiful, and offer variety. There are always alternative meals for those with allergies or legitimate restrictions. Salad bar, soy nut butter and jelly, fresh fruit, gluten-free, and vegetarian alternatives are available for campers at breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day.

## **LAUNDRY**

Laundry is sent out once per week. Therefore, it is necessary for your child to be prepared with clothes for ten days (i.e., enough socks, underwear, towels, etc.). **CLEARLY MARK ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** We suggest that any clothing that cannot be sent to the laundry (such as wool sweaters, new 100% cotton items) should not be brought to camp. Neither the camp nor the laundry service operator can assume any liability for lost or damaged laundry.



## PACKING AND PREPARING FOR CAMP

### PACKING LIST

There is truly little need for anything beyond those items listed in the clothing list. In fact, it can be damaging to the camp experience when other items are sent. The magic of camp is greatest when campers are free from the pressures of inequity. Camp is unique because it is the only time in a child's life when they can begin an experience with other children on a truly level playing field.

Many items, particularly electrical appliances, while seemingly harmless, can pose a risk to the safety of campers. Camp staff can control what is kept at camp. Parents can prevent what is SENT to camp. Please share in this responsibility of making camp a safe and productive environment by ensuring that only items that appear on the clothing list are sent.

A good rule to follow would be to not send any additional items that would not be allowed in a school environment due to inappropriateness or danger. Please use the packing list and instructions in our reference section to ensure your child is well equipped to enjoy their summer!

## TIPS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS WHEN PREPARING TO SEND YOUR CHILD TO CAMP

Summer camp is more than a vacation for children. At camp, kids learn to appreciate the outdoors, experience the companionship of other children and young adults working as counselors, learn new skills that enhance self-reliance, learn cooperation with others and a sense of community.

As a parent, there are a few things to consider about increasing the opportunity for a rewarding camp experience for your child. Some helpful suggestions include the following:

- **Consider camp as a learning experience.** This is an opportunity for your child to explore a world bigger than his/her home community and a chance for your child to practice "letting go." Letting go allows children to develop autonomy and a stronger sense of self, make new friends, develop new social skills, and unlock a tremendous amount of hidden potential. This time also allows parents an opportunity to take care of themselves so that they will feel refreshed when their child returns home.
- **Prepare for camp together.** Decisions about camp - like what to pack - should be a joint venture, keeping in mind your child's maturity. If your child feels a part of the decision-making process, his/her chances of having a positive experience will improve. Don't buy a whole new wardrobe. Camp is more rugged than life at home. A



child doesn't need new clothes, and having well-worn clothes and familiar possessions will help ease the transition. This is especially important for first-time campers.

- **Listen to and talk about concerns.** As the first day of camp nears, some children experience uneasiness about going away. Encourage your child to talk about these feelings rather than acting on what you think his/her feelings may be. Communicate confidence in your child's ability to handle being away from home.
- **Have realistic expectations.** Camp, like the rest of life, has high and low points. Not every moment will be filled with wonder and excitement. Encourage within your child – and maintain within yourself – a reasonable and realistic view of camp. Discuss both the difficulties your child may experience. Opportunities for problem solving, negotiating, developing greater self-awareness and increased sensitivity to the needs of others can help your child cope with successes and failures in everyday life. Resist sending your child to camp feeling pressured to succeed. The main purpose of camp is to have fun.



## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

**LOCATION:**

Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel  
8339 Old York Road Elkins Park, PA  
19027

All campers will arrive and depart from the same location and will be transported to and from camp in chartered buses unless other arrangements are made between camp and family. Please contact our office staff if accommodation is needed. **All campers will be checked for head lice and a temperature check upon before boarding the buses for camp.**

1ST SESSION ARRIVAL:	June 20, 2025
1ST SESSION DEPARTURE:	July 13, 2025
2ND SESSION ARRIVAL:	July 16, 2025
2ND SESSION DEPARTURE:	August 8, 2025

Detailed day of arrival and departure procedures will be mailed to you in a pre-camp informational packet, along with luggage tags prior to departure. Please make sure all luggage is labeled.



## COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD WHILE AT CAMP

### OLD SCHOOL SNAIL MAIL

Mail is distributed daily. Campers are instructed to write home Sunday through Thursday. All correspondence should be addressed as follows:

CAMPER NAME  
ASSIGNED BUNK, VILLAGE NAME  
164 REEDERS RUN ROAD  
STROUDSBURG, PA 18360

We suggest you send your child to camp with a minimum of 20 sets of stationary (envelope, pad, pens, and stamps; or stamps and postcards) per session. Preaddressing envelopes and listing individuals you'd like to receive mail from your camper (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) for younger campers is recommended.

You will be provided with your child's bunk assignment prior to departure day. We recommend writing to your child before they depart. Campers LOVE having mail to open shortly upon arrival!

#### **How can I contact my camper in the case of an outside emergency?**

While we do not allow campers to use phones while they are at camp, we certainly understand that parents occasionally need to contact their camper regarding an emergency outside of camp. Should you need to get a message to your camper, please call our office any time of day or night. All messages will be delivered to your camper as quickly as possible.

#### **Campers Calling Home**

To allow for the best possible adjustment for your son/daughter, we ask that you do not call camp with the expectation of speaking with your child. If there is a problem, please be assured that we will call you! It is our experience that calls home do not help children who are having difficulty adjusting to camp life.

Please do not tell your children that they may call you if they want to go home or if they are homesick. Instead, encourage them to discuss their problems with their counselors or their village leader. Again, rest assured that we will call you if there is a problem! In a family emergency, we will do all we can to facilitate communication between you and your child.

If you are writing to your child about anything that will disturb him/her, please notify us, so we can help your child through what may be a difficult time. Remember - written communication between you and your child is especially important; positive comments in your letters will only enhance your child's camp experience.

## BUNK1

GSC has partnered with Bunk1 to offer families a straightforward way of staying connected with their campers. With Bunk1, families can access secure online photo galleries with camper photo tagging, send printed notes to their camper, and watch videos from camp from a desktop browser and mobile app for iOS and Android devices.

Bunk1 is a wonderful way to communicate with your child. Emails sent via Bunk1 are printed daily and distributed with the mail. Please visit [bunk1family.com](http://bunk1family.com) for additional information and services available to help stay connected during your child's magical time at GSC.

## SURVEYS AND EVALUATIONS

At the end of each camping session, you will be sent a survey for you and your child to tell us about their experience at GSC. Please share your comments and concerns. Doing so further informs us when we are conducting our staff evaluations and allows us to continue to refine our protocols at camp and provide future campers with the best experience at GSC.



## HELPFUL HINTS FOR FIRST-TIME CAMPERS

- Teach your child how to make a bed. This is an important part of the daily routine and will be helpful when campers first arrive at camp.
- Have your child practice folding and organizing clothing and other personal belongings. Neatness and organizational skills count when children live in group situations.

Your child will be showering at camp. Often young children are not accustomed to showering and are more comfortable with baths. Practice in showering will help the transition from bath to shower.

Talk to your child about camp and discuss any concerns that he/she may have about their new camping experience. Feel free to contact the camp office prior to camp to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's adjustment to camp.

Most of our campers do not experience homesickness, anxiety, or adjustment difficulties. They tend to settle into the camp's daily routines in the first few days after their arrival. However, there are a handful of campers who do have a challenging time adjusting to camp life.

Some of the more frequent questions that children can/will ask before camp are:

- “Will I miss my family, my pet, my bed, my things?”
- “Will other kids like me?”
- “Will I make friends?”
- “Will I have fun?”
- “Will my counselors be nice to me?”

These concerns should not be ignored or dismissed. On the other hand, we strongly advise against making a ‘mountain out of a molehill’. We suggest that you be as positive as possible.

Recognize your child’s concern and calm his/her fears with encouraging words. For example, a parent might respond to a child’s fear of missing home by saying, *“It’s only natural to miss home a little (and we’ll miss you), but you’ll have such a GREAT time at camp, that soon you’ll feel fine. When you get home, we can’t wait to hear about everything you did, and about your new friends, etc.”*

Reinforce that camp is a wonderful, safe, caring place to be, and that if it were anything else, you would not be sending them there for the summer.

**Please do not tell your child that he/she can come home at any time during the session if they are unhappy or homesick.** We will be happy to work with you to devise other strategies for reluctant or nervous campers. Please communicate any concerns you or your child may have to the Camp Director. It may be helpful to send your concerns in written form so that your words can be available to the staff who will be working with your child daily. Call the office and speak with a staff member before the start of camp.



## THIS AND THAT

### **PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

#### **May I visit my child while they are at camp?**

We generally do not allow visits to camp by parents and friends. Your child is at camp for only a brief time and most visits tend to disrupt the dynamics of your child’s experience. For the security of our campers and staff, we only allow people on site who have undergone our background screening or who are approved and continually supervised by a director. If you need to come to camp to drop something off for your camper, drops will be made with appropriate camp staff in the parking lot and delivered to your child.

#### **Can you accommodate campers with special needs?**

We are not equipped to care for campers with certain special needs. If you are unsure if we can accommodate your camper’s specific needs, please contact our director. We love talking to parents and will be happy to speak with you about what we can and cannot provide for at camp so that together, we can make the best decision for your child. We strive to provide the best possible environment for every child. If there is any information that would help us care for your camper better, please indicate it on the Medical Forms (completed during registration). Please also submit any relevant “Get To Know Me information” so that our staff can begin to learn about your camper before he or she arrives.

Your child's counselors read all the information on these forms; the more information you can provide us with, the better we will be able to respond to the needs of your camper!

### **Are there storage spaces in the cabins?**

Yes. Each camper will have a cubby for personal items and a place to hang jackets, towels, etc. A trunk or large duffel bag are good choices to bring to store your clothing.

### **Some Helpful Hints for Parents**

- Communicate with your child in a positive, light style.
- Have a card or letter waiting at camp before your child arrives.
- Don't let your child know how lonely you are.
- Brief notes during the summer saying hello are fine. Long letters are even better!
- Packages of stationery, stickers, comic books, games - things that can be shared in the bunk –are appreciated.

### **When your child comes home still "in camp mode"**

After a summer of fun and freedom, fitting back into the family and assuming responsibilities may be a challenge for some kids. Give your child time and space for this reentry process. Support the positive changes you observe. Reintroduce "house rules" with patience and awareness that your child has done some maturing over the summer.

## **CAMPERS**

### **What if I feel homesick?**

Everyone feels homesick at one time or another whether they are new or not. This is totally normal! Missing home is a natural thing when you are away from your family. We are all here to help you. In fact, many of us have been homesick ourselves! The one thing to remember is that these feelings will certainly pass.

### **Will the tooth fairy be able to find me at camp?**

If you lose a tooth at camp, don't worry, the tooth fairy will find you, and the entire camp will cheer you on!

### **Is camp only for athletes?**

No. GSC offers a wide variety of activities for all types of kids. If you don't like competitive sports, that's totally fine because there are dozens of other activities to choose from. And if you do enjoy competitive sports, GSC has plenty! Campers receive individualized sports instruction during each activity period.

### **Do I have to clean up my bunk?**

Yes, each bunk has a 'clean-up' that takes place daily after breakfast. You get about 45 minutes to make your bed, tidy-up your clothes in your cubby, help to clean the bunk, and get ready for your morning activities. The cleanest boys & girls bunks in each village are awarded a special prize weekly!

### **What if I get my period for the first time at camp?**

This is not something to be scared or embarrassed about. If you did not come to camp with the proper sanitary needs, we have you covered. Speak to your counselor and ask to be taken to the Wellness Center. The medical staff will be able to answer all your questions and take care of your needs. We can even call home for you to let your parents know.

