****Dear Camper Parent:

Thank you for choosing Camp Gray! We are very pleased to confirm your child’s registration and to share with you information that we hope will answer important questions you may have about your child’s upcoming camp experience. If you have any questions, please contact us (email address and phone number listed above). We hope to make this a very positive experience for you and your child.

**A. Before you get to Camp Gray**

1. **Receipt/Fees:** Please read carefully the e-mailed receipt to confirm the accuracy of your child’s name, age, address, etc., as well as your payment information. Please also verify the session and dates your child is registered for.

Because we want to devote all of our time to making your child’s stay with us the best, we ask that all camper fees be paid before arrival. **Please pay in full by May 1st**. You will, however, have the opportunity at Sunday registration to make additional payments for horseback riding, tower climbing, group photos, photo CDs, e-mail service, or the canteen store.

1. **Health Care:** Our Health Center is staffed by a volunteer Health Manager who works within the treatment procedures provided by our consulting physician, Dr. Brian Reeder. The Health Manager is typically a Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, or M.D. Nearly all of our staff are certified in CPR and First Aid.
2. **Health Form:** Please be sure to complete the information on your childs health and medication form by May 1st. Everyone must complete and update this form *every year*.
3. **Medications:** It is not necessary to bring over-the-counter medications to camp, as our Health Center is stocked with common over-the-counter medicines (see list on the health form). Our health care staff will administer all medications. The State Board of Health and the American Camp Association require that all medication must come to camp in the original container and be clearly labeled with the correct name, drug, and dosage schedule. The camp will not give campers any medication that is improperly labeled or not prescribed *for your child*. Please send no more than what is needed for the week. We cannot accept day-planners or other containers used at home. All medications are kept in locked storage (typically in the Health Center) and will be checked in with the Health Care Team upon your arrival at camp. Please bring all medications to check-in. Medications may not be kept with the camper, including non-prescription drugs (exceptions made for “rescue” inhalers [broncho-dilators such as *Albuterol* or *Ventolin*] and epi-pens). Tip: Look at the camp schedule (see website), speak with your doctor, if necessary, and think about a medication dosing schedule that fits the camp schedule.
4. **Medical Treatment:** Minor medical treatment will be provided by the camp staff. Our consulting physician (Dr. Brian Reeder), the Lake Delton Clinic, and Baraboo St. Clare Hospital, are available on call for any emergency or major medical treatment. If your child becomes acutely ill, we will keep him or her in the Health Center no more than 24 hours, and any child with a contagious illness will be sent home. If you suspect that your child has been exposed to a contagious illness (such as chicken pox or head lice) before coming to camp, or has had a fever within the 24 hours before camp arrival, please call camp to discuss rescheduling your child.
5. **Healthcare Notification:** Our healthcare staff will make an effort to contact you by phone, using the phone numbers provided on your child’s health form, if your child has need for out-of-camp healthcare. Because of timing and scheduling conflicts, we cannot promise that we will be successful in reaching you. Please make sure we know how to reach you during your child’s stay. We generally do not contact you if your child is seen in the camp health center for routine problems (e.g. skinned knees, sore throat, headache) that do not require physician referral. The decision to consult you for routine, in-camp healthcare is determined on a case-by-case basis by our provider. You will typically be notified if your child visits the health center with a repeated complaint, or if your child’s condition does not improve in a reasonable amount of time.
6. **Insurance:** Camp Gray does not provide primary health and accident insurance for campers or staff.
7. **Special Needs:** Camp Gray is prepared to provide care to children with health or behavior needs commonly found in the general population. If your child has special needs requiring particular care or staff assistance, please contact the camp office prior to your camp stay. A written health care or behavior plan may be required to help us provide the best care.
8. **Security:** We cannot permit campers to leave camp without the proper supervision of our staff or with the custodial parent/guardian. We must have written, signed permission in advance if the camper is to be picked up by someone other than the custodial parent. All campers must sign out in the office if leaving at any time other than the scheduled end-of-session departure.
9. **Cancellation/Refund Policy:** The $100 deposit is not refundable after registration has been confirmed in a program. The balance of fees paid will be refunded if the camper does not attend camp due to illness or injury. In all other instances, no refund of camp fees will be given unless notice of cancellation is given to Camp Gray at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the camper's session(though, the $100 deposit fee is non-refundable in this instance). A prorated portion of the fee will be refunded if the camper is sent home from camp due to illness or injury; refund will not be made for a remaining period of two days or less. If a camper leaves early due to homesickness, disciplinary reasons, or parent request, no refund will be given.

**B. Welcome to Camp Gray ~ Check-in on Sunday**

1. **Arrival:** Check-in at camp is from **3:00 – 4:15 PM** on Sunday. (Please do not arrive before 3:00 PM, unless you make prior arrangements with us.) Staff will be preparing for your child until 3:00 PM, and only after that time will they be ready to welcome you. Thank you for observing this request. Staff will greet you at the driveway and give you a card that will help direct you through the check-in process. **Please bring medication to registration, as the Health Manager will collect it then**.
2. **Spending Money:** We ask that all spending money be deposited in your child’s canteen account. This can be done prior to arrival or at Sunday check-in. Any unspent funds will be returned to you at the end of the week unless you choose to contribute it to the campership fund. The average camper brings $20 - $30 to camp. The canteen store includes an assortment of clothing, souvenirs, ice cream, and “necessary” items such as stamps and postcards. Parents may visit the store on Sunday afternoon or end-of-session pick-up. This is a great way to support Camp Gray!
3. **Horseback Riding:** Optional afternoon horseback rides are offered to all Settlers, Trailblazers, Pathfinders, and Ranchers (Settlers will ride in an arena, while all other campers will ride on our wooded trails) for an additional fee. Campers may take up to two trail rides during the week (one time only if also tower climbing, or if attending session #5, July 1-4). Horseback riding is not available during mini-camp (August 5-7). Helmets are provided and required. Riding lessons are available to Trailblazers (gr. 6-8) as a morning program option. An additional fee is required for these 4, one-hour lessons. Those taking lessons may also take trail rides in the afternoon. *Note: Horseback riding on Camp Gray property is provided by Wagons West, LLC. While Camp Gray has taken great care in selecting a contractor to provide horseback riding and instruction, Camp Gray is not responsible for the actions of Wagons West, LLC.* Tip: Campers are required to wear trousers (jeans are best) and closed-toed footwear (shoes or boots) on horse rides – don’t forget to pack those!
4. **Tower Climbing:** This optional feature is offered to campers in grades six and above (Trailblazers, Pathfinders, Ranchers, and Explorers). The 1-hour, afternoon climbing sessions are held on our 40-foot climbing tower under the supervision of trained staff members. Camp Gray provides helmets, harnesses, and all other safety equipment. Campers need only provide adequate footwear (lightweight hiking boots or closed-toe athletic shoes). Fee is $15. *Note: Explorer climbing fee is included in camper fee* Tip: Campers may sign up for no more than two afternoon “specials” (horseback riding or tower climbing) during their week at camp (two horse rides, *or* two climbs, *or* one of each), due to scheduling issues. During session 5 (July 1-4), campers may sign up for no more than *one* horse ride or *one* afternoon climbing session.
5. **Swimming:** All campers are expected to take a swim assessment (“Sunday Dip”) after Sunday registration to determine their ability group. State law requires this *annual* assessment consisting of swimming and treading water.
6. **Group Photograph:** You may purchase, for $8, an 8”x10” color photo of your child’s cabin group. The photo is taken on Sunday or Monday and the prints are typically distributed during Friday pick-up. Please order your photo during or before Sunday registration, as we typically place the order on Monday.
7. **Photo CD:** You may purchase, for $10, a photo CD containing all the digital photos taken during your child’s week at camp. Due space restrictions, we have to significantly reduce the resolution of these photos when we display them on the online photo gallery. The photos on the CD will be the original hi-resolution files suitable for prints, computer backgrounds, etc. The photo CD will also include a couple of other hidden gems.
8. **Voyageur, Explorer, and Ranch Programs:** Detailed information about these programs will be e-mailed to campers and parents in late spring (information can also be found on our website, www.campgray.com).

**C. While your camper is at Camp Gray**

1. **Phone/e-mail:** Other than for an emergency, please correspond with your child by letter or our camper email service (see #3, below), not by phone or regular camp email. We ask that your child not bring to camp a cell phone (see special note on packing list). If you need to speak with your child, please contact the camp office. If your child needs to speak with you, he/she can ask to make a call from the office.
2. **Camp Gray Website:** Throughout the summer, you may visit the ‘Off at Camp’ page, a password-protected page of our website, at no cost to you, to view photos (usually updated twice daily) of camp activities and to read daily accounts of happenings at camp. In addition, you can check this portion of our website (http://campgray.com/summer-camp/off-at-camp/) to look for answers to frequently-asked questions, and for up-to-date information about how we are responding to developments such as severe weather. Complete instructions for this service (including this summer’s password) will be available at Sunday registration. This information will also be emailed to you (if you gave us your email address on your camper registration form) during the week prior to your child’s camp stay.
3. **E-mail Service:** For a pre-paid fee of $8.00, you may send up to 5 emails to your child, and your child may send up to 3 emails to you. (Please note that your child will not actually sit down at a computer to email you. We will email to you a scanned image of a hand-written note that your child writes on special stationery that we provide.) Our staff will print and deliver your emails once daily (we typically print at 11:00AM). Complete instructions for this service, as well as the necessary stationery, will be available at Sunday registration.
4. **Mail:** Parents, relatives, and friends are encouraged to write during the week. Campers are encouraged to do the same! Postcards and stamps are available for purchase in the canteen store. Packages are welcome, but please know that we do not allow food in the cabin areas (this discourages critters from visiting!). Any food will be kept in the canteen store, where it can be given to the camper during his/her daily store time. Please note that snacks are provided daily by the camp, and a few snack items (ice cream novelties/popsicles) are available for sale in the canteen store.

Please address mail in the following way: **Camper Name**

 **c/o Counselor Name** (*you will receive counselor name at check-in)*

 **E10213 SHADY LANE RD**

 **REEDSBURG WI 53959**

1. **Removing Campers From Camp:** The decision to dismiss a camper will be made by the Camp Director or his/her designee. Camp Gray reserves the right to dismiss campers for the following reasons: 1) Violation of camp rules, including the use or possession of alcohol or other illegal drugs. 2) If a camper’s sickness or injury requires care beyond the scope of the camp Health Manager’s abilities and authority. 3) Violent acts toward other campers, staff, or property, especially if a camper threatens the safety of himself or others.

**D. Parting is such sweet sorrow**

1. **Departure:** Each camper session ends on Friday evening (with the exception of short week and the mini week, see #2, below). Your family is invited to join us for the **closing program at 4:30 PM.** This is a good chance for your family to experience some of camp’s energy and to meet counselors and new friends. Please arrive no later than 5:15 PM if you do not attend the closing program. We request that you sign out your camper as he/she leaves our care. We must have written, signed permission in advance if the camper is to be picked up by someone other than the custodial parent. If your child needs to leave earlier than the scheduled time, please notify us in advance.
2. **Session 5, July 1-4:** Departure is at the normal time (see #1, “Departure,” above) on **Wednesday, July 4.**

**Mini Session, August 5-7**: Departure is at the normal time on **Tuesday, August 7**.

**E. Camp Gray Packing list**

This list serves as a guide to help you prepare for your week at camp. Happy Packing!

Pack casual and comfortable clothing. It is helpful to label all of your camper’s belongings. Camp Gray assumes no responsibility for lost or left-behind items. Unclaimed lost and found items are kept at camp for one week, after which they are donated to a charity.

Please note that campers are encouraged to dress modestly, and expected to dress appropriately. As such, we ask that campers wear one-piece swimsuits, and discourage campers from wearing clothing which is overly-revealing (such as short shorts, spaghetti-straps or bare midriffs). Shorts should have at least a 3-inch inseam. Campers will be asked to not wear any clothing which displays or promotes a message which is inappropriate for their age (incl. alcohol) or in conflict with Christian values.

**The following is a suggested list of clothing and items to bring:**

🞏t-shirts

🞏shorts

🞏optional white shirt for tie-dyeing

🞏light jacket

🞏underwear/socks (5-6 pairs)

🞏jeans/long pants,(1-2, jeans are required for horseback riding)

🞏gym shoes (required for most camp activities)

🞏fleece/sweatshirt

🞏pajamas

🞏rain coat

🞏sunhat/cap

🞏water shoes/sandals

🞏swim suit (one-piece)

🞏swim towel

🞏swim goggles (optional)

🞏laundry bag/plastic bag

🞏water bottle

🞏camera (optional)

🞏camp cross (returning campers gr. 7 and up)

**Personal Care Items**

🞏toiletries (soap/wash cloth, toothbrush/paste, shampoo, hair brush, deodorant, lotion, lip balm

🞏bath towel

🞏sunscreen (SPF 15 plus/waterproof)

🞏mosquito repellent

🞏medications **(in original containers)**

**Sleeping Gear**

🞏sleeping bag or bed linen(Trailblazers, Ranch, Pathfinders may need a sleeping bag if there is a *nice night for an overnight camp-out*

🞏pillow

🞏a sheet (to cover the plastic mattress cover)

🞏flashlight

🞏books to read at rest time/journal

🞏stationery/stamps

🞏pen/pencil

**The following is a list of items that should *not* be brought to camp:**

Cell phones and texting devices\*\*

iPods and other electronics

Pets/animals

Hair Dryers & Curling Irons

Personal Sports Equipment

Alcohol, Tobacco, Illegal Drugs

Firearms/Slingshots

Fireworks

Knives

Matches/Lighter

Snack Foods

\*\* Why no cell phones at camp? Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get misplaced or damaged in the active, outdoor environment of camp, we have two fundamental concerns in this area. First of all, we feel that the camp experience is most powerful when campers can “retreat” from their normal cares, concerns, and routines, and the “instant” communication provided by cell phones makes it difficult to do this. Secondly, this “instant” communication with home can prevent the camp staff from quickly addressing problems that may arise with your child. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn to solve some of their own challenges. This emerging independence is a great benefit of the camp experience! To this end, we agree to contact you if your child is experiencing a challenge to their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking with your child before they leave for camp, and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, including any staff member. Thank you.

**First time at camp? Here’s some helpful information for you!**

Coming to camp for the first time, while exciting, can be a bit overwhelming. In an effort to help you prepare for your camp experience, we’ve taken time to answer some of the questions that we frequently hear from those new to Camp Gray. If, after reading this information, you have other questions, please call us at 608-356-8200, or email bigfun@campgray.com. We want you to feel as prepared as possible for your time here!

\*Please note: If your child is an Explorer, Voyageur, or Rancher, you will receive in the late spring some special information about your program, or you can find it on our website, [www.campgray.com](http://www.campgray.com).

**Where will my child stay?**

Unless your child is an Explorer, Voyageur, or Rancher, he/she will be staying in a cabin or room with bunk beds, a small “cubby” for some personal things, and electric lights. The room will have fans, too, to help everyone stay cool on those hot days. The bathrooms (with flush toilets and showers!) will be close by. Most girls (except older Trailblazers and Pathfinders) stay in a big lodge called “Vinny’s”, and sleep in a room with your cabin group. The counselors and co-counselors stay in the cabin/room with the campers.

**Who will be in my child’s group?**

Your child will be placed in a group of 8 or 10 campers of the same gender and age-group. If you requested that your child be placed with a particular child, that request will be honored, as long as the other child was registered, is in the same age-group, *and also requested your child.* **[Please Note: A request to *NOT* be placed with a particular camper will take precedence over a request to be placed *WITH* a particular camper.]** If you did not request a cabin mate, don’t fret – camp is a great place to meet new friends, and there will be other campers in your group who don’t know anyone when they arrive. Your child’s cabin group will be led by a counselor, with the help of a “co-counselor” (another staff member who helps with the group at certain times of the day, like meals and bedtime).

**What will my child do each day?**

For a sneak peek at all the crazy fun that is planned for your camper, you can view the camp schedule at, http://campgray.com/summer-camp/summer-camp-daily-schedule/

**What will happen when we arrive at camp on the first day?**

After you turn onto the camp driveway and drive a few hundred yards into camp, you will be greeted by several staff members, who will welcome you, find out who you are, tell you where your child will be staying for the week, and give you directions to a parking spot (they’ll also give you a really handy card containing the name of your child’s counselor and cabin, along with step-by-step directions for navigating the check-in process, so you won’t have to memorize all of this!). Once you park your vehicle, someone will help you find your cabin, and you can take all of your stuff there. Let the fun begin! You get to meet your child’s counselor and help your child pick out a bunk and get settled in the cabin. The counselor will ask you to sign in your child, and will ask you for some more information.

After your child is settled, he/she will be asked to change into a swimsuit (some campers wear a swimsuit under their clothes, just to be prepared) and head to the pool for a swim assessment (Pathfinders will do this on Monday afternoon). This *required* assessment helps our staff get a handle on each camper’s swimming proficiency. Campers who are unable to complete the swim assessment will still get to swim, but will be required to stay in the shallow end of the pool. If your child is nervous about this, please assure him/her that it’s OK to not be a great swimmer at camp, and that he/she will be able to go swimming each day.

On the way to the pool, you will be asked to check in, with your child, in the new dining hall. The staff there will make sure that all required forms are completed and signed, and that any outstanding fees are paid. At this time you can sign up for and pay for horse rides, tower climbing, a group photograph, a photo CD, email service, and add to your child’s canteen store balance. Then, you and your child will visit with the nurse, who will make sure your health form is complete and up to date, find out how your child is feeling, collect any medication, and discuss any health concerns that you have. Now, it’s off to the pool!

After leaving the pool, your child will be asked to join the cabin group for a tour and general orientation to camp. This is a good time for parents to say goodbye. After learning more about camp and playing a few games, we’ll head to the new dining hall for dinner, followed by a “rip-roaring, foot-stomping” campfire filled with singing, stories, and funny skits. The day will end, like each day, with special cabin group devotion time in the cabin. Then, it’s time to get some sleep and get ready for another fun day!

**What if my child is homesick?**

Here’s a few things to note about homesickness:

\*Mild homesickness is normal. Almost all children have some mild homesick feelings when they are away.

\*Severe homesickness is rare.

\*Talking about homesickness does not cause homesickness, nor make it worse.

\*There are many things to think and do before leaving home to lessen homesickness.

\*There are even more things to think and do during camp to lessen homesickness.

\*Homesick feelings reflect the love you have for things at home.

\*Homesickness, and getting over it, is a normal process that helps children develop independence and self-confidence.

**What can we do to prevent strong homesickness?**

* Include your child in planning for camp – they feel more comfortable if they have some control over what’s happening.
* Talk with your child about homesickness – it’s best to acknowledge that it might happen, that it’s normal, and that there are things that we can do to handle it. You can address any fears your child might have such as bedwetting, fear of the dark, unfamiliar people and surroundings, etc. Please call us if you have any questions or concerns regarding camp.
* Use a calendar to plan for camp. Show your child when camp starts, how long it lasts, and when you’ll pick him/her up. For younger children who don’t have a well-developed sense of time, it can be helpful to put the length of their stay in perspective (“It’s just like the amount of time we spent at grandma’s last Christmas.”). The fewer surprises, the better!
* Keep doubts to yourself – try not to say things which will make your child worry about how you’ll feel when he’s at camp. Better to say, “Of course I’ll miss you, because I love you. But I know that you’ll have a great time at camp,” than to say, “I don’t know what I’m going to do while you’re gone at camp. I’m going to miss you so much, but I’ll survive somehow.”
* Find out if a friend or sibling can attend camp at the same time.
* Please encourage your child to participate in camp activities, as this will help him or her relate with other campers.
* Arrange for practice time away from home. Consider planning an overnight stay for your child at the home of a friend or relative.
* Anticipate changes in your child’s daily routine, and allow your child to try new procedures at home. For instance, if your child is used to taking a bath, encourage him or her to try taking a shower.
* Write your child a letter that will arrive early in the week (or leave it with the camp staff to give out on Monday).
* Provide your child with materials, including your address, for writing letters home.
* Do not overreact to an unhappy letter**.** A child may go through emotional ups and downs at camp. If, however, you are concerned about your child, please call the camp office. This way you can check on your child without his or her knowledge.
* Please send letters that do not cause stress. A letter telling your child how much he or she is missed and how much fun everyone is having at home may bring on homesickness. In your letters encourage your child to have fun; share with them how happy you are that they are able to have fun for a week at camp.
* Please do not encourage your child to call you, or make pickup deals with him/her. This conveys a lack of confidence in his/her ability to handle the separation, and can discourage him/her from investing in the group and can contribute to homesickness.
* Check out books from your local library such as, *Summer Camp Handbook,* by Dr. Christopher Thurber & Dr. Jon Malinowski

Attend the Camp Gray Open House on Mothers Day, from 11 AM until 2 PM. This will allow you and your child to meet some of the camp staff and become more familiar with the camp.

*How does the Camp Gray staff deal with homesickness?* Our staff are trained to make the cabin group a welcoming, safe place. Staff establish routines, especially at bedtime (stories, prayers, etc.) to make campers feel more comfortable. Homesick campers are encouraged to try activities and to stay involved. Staff praise campers for their growth as they become more comfortable at camp. If homesickness is severe and persistent, we will call you for advice. We appreciate your help as the people who know your child the best. You can make the decision about whether or not to talk with your child, as this can be either helpful or detrimental, depending on the individual child. We truly see this as a partnership!

**Tips from Alumni**

These are a few tips from families who have been coming to camp for a few years.

**Smart Packing**

Photo Inventory: As a key to making sure that your camper comes home with what they took to camp, organization is very important. Instead of making a list for your camper of what is in each pocket or bag, try taking a picture of it. Lay out all of the items that are going to go in each pocket of their bag or zip lock bag and take a digital picture of it. You can then print off the pictures and put it in each bag. That way your child can easily sort through their bag to find what they need.

Self-Service: One problem some families have had in the past is that their camper cannot find what they pack, or forget what they have in their bag. In order to prevent this have your camper pack their own bag and then double check it with them. By doing this they will know what they have and will be more likely to use it.

**Keeping in Touch**

Fun Form Letters: This one is great for the boys. Sometimes campers get so wrapped up in the fun and excitement of camp that they forget to write home. One way to help them out is to send form letters with them, so all they have to do is circle a choice or fill in the blank. For example: Today for breakfast we had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. After that I went (circle one) swimming/horse back ridding/canoeing. Something my counselor did that was funny today was \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Hidden Notes: One way you as parents can keep in touch without writing letters, is to stick little notes and treats in your camper’s things. You can hide little notes of encouragement or also small gifts such as stickers or a small favorite toy.

Postcard Kit: In order to make letter-writing easier, prepare a kit for your campers. This kit can include markers, pencils, pens, and fun stickers. Also put preaddressed postcards or envelopes in the kit.

**Heading off Homesickness**

Pillowcase Pals: Craft stores sell special transfer paper to run through your home printer and then iron onto cloth. Try printing off pictures of friends and family and ironing them onto a special pillow case. You can also have your camper’s friends sign it. It serves as a good reminder of home and also as a good conversation starter for your camper to get to know the other campers in the cabin.

Pillow Hugs: Suggest that your child, before going to sleep, hug his/her pillow. Tell your child that this will represent him/her hugging you, and that you will hug your pillow each night, to represent hugging your child.

Good-night Message: Bedtime is a prime time for homesickness. If you think your child might get homesick before bed, one thing you can do is send along a few encouraging bedtime notes. This can include your camper’s favorite book, bedtime story, or night prayers that you say with your child.

Homesickness Kit: You can make your camper a little kit of small symbolic or sentimental treasures. The kit can include a family photo, a tissue to wipe any tears, and rubber band to remind them of your hugs. If the kit is small enough it could be squeezed into a pocket or water bottle holder, so they have it with them at all times.

Please contact us if we can help you in any other way to prepare yourself and your child for camp. We look forward to seeing you this summer!

**Call us at 608-356-8200, or email** **bigfun@campgray.com** **(check out** [**www.campgray.com**](http://www.campgray.com)**, too!)**