

Parent Pack

2026



BIG LAKE

YOUTH CAMP

26435 Big Lake Rd
Sisters OR 97759

www.biglake.org

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Contact Information

Business Address:

Big Lake Youth Camp
19800 Oatfield Rd
Gladstone OR 97027

Business Phone:

(503) 850-3583
(503) 850-3483 (fax)

Business Office Email:

office@biglake.org

Camp Address:

Big Lake Youth Camp
26435 Big Lake Rd
Sisters OR 97759

Camp Phone:

(503) 850-3562 (summer)
(503) 805-CAMP (2267)

Camp Emergency Phone:

(503) 805-0005

www.biglake.org



BIG LAKE

YOUTH CAMP

Welcome

Thank you for choosing Big Lake Youth Camp to be part of your summer adventure! The *Parent Pack* explains the Big Lake experience and should give you a good idea of what to expect. If you have any other questions, we invite you to send an email or give us a call.

About Big Lake:

Big Lake Youth Camp is a Christian camp, owned and operated by the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. We welcome registrations from all kids ages 7-17 without regard to race, religion, or political view. Big Lake is accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA), and hold membership with the Association of Adventist Camp Professionals (AACP) and Christian Camp & Conference Association (CCCA). Big Lake Youth Camp is located in the Willamette National Forest, and operates under a special use permit granted by the USDA Forest Service. Big Lake Youth Camp is a provider of equal opportunity recreation services.

Note: *The Administration reserves the right to reject an applicant and send home any camper whose influence is considered to be injurious to the best interest of the camp/campers.*

Mission and Vision

Mission

We exist to build people who will change the world.

Vision

People will experience a love so compelling that they will spend the rest of their lives pursuing its source.

Camps

Abba's Child:

This free-of-charge camp is specifically designed for kids who have experienced the death of an immediate family member. Our support-based counseling helps kids know they are not alone in their experience. Abba's Child campers get to hang out with other kids who understand what they're going through while still enjoying a great week at Big Lake Youth Camp. Whether you would like to nominate someone to attend or donate to keep Abba's Child Camp going. For more information, reach out to Abbaschild.org

Adventure Camp:

Adventure camp is designed to be a child's first introduction to the Big Lake camp experience. Kids have the opportunity to try out most of the activities Big Lake has to offer. The age level of our campers is always kept in mind. Adventure camp is designed for campers 7-9 years old.

Family Camp:

When parents hear about the fun their children have at camp, they often want in on the action too! Family camp provides that opportunity. Check our website for availability. Enjoy great recreation, awesome friends, evening Campfire programs, and no cooking! Activities are scheduled with a sign-up sheet system and childcare and/or special programming is provided mornings and afternoons to allow parents and older children the opportunity to enjoy activities together.

RAD Camps:

Big Lake's RAD Camps are overnight, fun, outdoor adventures, specifically designed for 13-17 year olds. With trained and skilled outdoor professional

staff, campers will make life-long friends and learn higher level skills specific to their chosen activity.

Some RAD Camps are based at the Big Lake campus while others are based offsite at locations such as Smith Rock State Park, the Deschutes River, the Central Oregon Cascades, and bike trails throughout Central Oregon.

REG Camp:

Big Lake’s traditional program designed for 10-17 year olds. Adventure and Junior REG campers will rotate through Big Lake’s various activities in cabin groups, both in the mornings and afternoons. Our Tween and Teen REG campers are offered a selection of morning classes to choose from at registration which they go to every morning and then rotate through other activities each afternoon with their cabin groups.

Evenings are full of fun games and end with our awesome Campfire program. The REG camp daily schedule allows campers to enjoy a wide variety of what Big Lake has to offer.

REG Camp Day

A typical day for a REG camper follows the schedule below. Camper attend activities with their cabin group and their counselor.

8:00 AM	Reveille
8:30 AM	Flag Raising & Camp Council
9:15 AM	Breakfast
10:00 AM	Litter Patrol
10:15 AM	Activity Rotations
1:00 PM	Mail Call
1:15 PM	Lunch
2:15 PM	Quiet Time or Group Activity
3:10 PM	Activity Rotations
6:10 PM	Flag Lowering
6:20 PM	Supper
7:10 PM	Fun Times
8:20 PM	Campfire
9:30 PM	Reflections & Lights Out

Camp Questions, A-Z

Cabin Assignments: *How are cabins assigned?*

Adventure and Junior campers will be able to request cabinmates during the registration process. We will try our best to honor those requests.

Our **Tween and Teen campers** will be assigned to cabins according to the morning class/activity they have chosen. Friends wanting to be in the same cabin will need to take the same morning class/activity.

RAD campers will already be in the same cabins, separated by gender, so no cabinmate requests are necessary.

Campfire: *What is it?*

Every evening your child will head down to the Campfire Bowl in their cabin groups. Campers will participate in an energetic and memorable program that creatively presents a character-building lesson. Each year many campers report that this is their

Can I claim what I pay for my child's camp on my taxes?

Because we are an overnight camp, the monies you pay to send your child to camp are not tax deductible. (See <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p503.pdf>, page 7 for further clarification). However, since we *are* a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, any donations you may make are tax deductible, and we will happily give out our EIN if requested.

Cell Phones: *Can campers bring them?*

Please **do not** send a cell phone to camp with your child. Camps across the country have found that cell phones interfere with a camper's ability to develop independence and usually make homesickness worse. If your child brings a cell phone to camp, their camp counselor will hold it for them. Please send a camera that is independent from their phone. Here is a fairly inexpensive digital camera choice from [Amazon](#) as an example. Thanks for your understanding.

Camp Store: *What's for sale?*

Kids love shopping at the camp store. With the help of the friendly staff in the Big Lake Mall, your camper will have the opportunity to buy cool merch to remind them of their time at camp. We carry items including water bottles, stuffed animals, t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and many other fun items! Snacks are also available, along

with miscellaneous items a camper may have forgotten at home, like sunscreen and lip balm. At the end of the summer, used camp equipment can also be purchased (bikes, waterfront gear, etc.). Please contact our office for more information about camp equipment for sale. All profits from the Big Lake Mall are used to make Big Lake a better place. Any money left on your camper's store account will be refunded to the online account through which they were registered, unless you request a refund from our business office.

We know that some families like to visit the Big Lake Mall together at check-in or pick-up. We love to see you in our Mall! Stop on by and say hello.

Do you have to be a Christian to attend Big Lake?

No, we welcome all children to attend Big Lake! Big Lake is activity-based, and we're intentional about creating a shame-free environment based on what people believe. Big Lake Youth Camp is a Christian camp operated by the Seventh-day Adventist church. It is not our intent to pressure campers to be Christians, however the invitation to consider it will be made at some point during the week. There will be prayers before meals, at the beginning and end of the day, and a short cabin worship or story time each evening. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact us.

Dress Code: *Should they wear it?*

We believe in clothing that is functional for our activities. Big Lake is a high-activity-based camp, and as such, our goal is for kids to be able to play and participate fully without clothing malfunctions.

Girls: Well-fitting swimsuits that stay put during high-intensity activities are required. Tankinis are appropriate; no bikinis, please.

Guys: Trunks or board short style swimwear; no speedo-style.

Both: Underwear should not be visible.
No inappropriate messages or imagery on clothing, including profanity, derogatory language, or violence, etc.

Functional clothing your camper will need includes long pants, shirts long enough to cover the torso, long-sleeved shirts, warm clothes, and closed-toed shoes.

If in doubt, leave it at home. In the event that your child is dressed appropriately for an activity, they will be asked to change into something more suitable.

Thanks so much for your help!

Forest Fire Danger: *What will happen if there is a forest fire?*

Each summer brings a varied level of fire danger to the forests of Oregon. Big Lake is located on Willamette National Forest land and we must always be prepared to face a sudden fire. We have a United States Forest Service (USFS) and American Camping Association (ACA) approved fire evacuation plan in place outlining how we would respond in the event of a fire emergency. The following objectives guide our plan:

1. To guarantee the safety of all campers and staff.

The USFS and Big Lake Youth Camp are united in their goal to protect our campers and staff. Sand Mountain Fire Lookout has a direct view of Big Lake and contact with our directors. In addition, the USFS is constantly monitoring fire danger in our area. When there is an imminent threat they update us daily on conditions. Should this happen, please know the following:

1. Updates will be posted on our website, www.biglake.org, and/or social media with specific information. Please check these sources rather than calling the camp office, as this helps keep our phone lines clear.
2. If an evacuation is called: The Gladstone office (503) 850-3583, will be notified immediately and communication will be coordinated from that location.
3. In the event of an evacuation: depending on the location of the fire, campers will be bused to one of two transition sites, one on the west side of the mountains, one on the east side. Food, communication, and shelter will be provided until pick-ups can be arranged or buses are available to transport campers back to their homes.

Transition sites:

West Side Livingstone Adventist Academy

5771 Fruitland Road NE
Salem OR 97317

East Side Three Sisters Adventist School

21155 Tumalo Road
Redmond OR 97701-8938

Lost & Found: *Where do the items go?*

Lost and found items are returned to our Gladstone office. Due to limited storage space we will only be able to hold items for two weeks after the camper's Big Lake session. Please call our Gladstone office at (503) 850-3583 within two weeks if you are missing an item. Though Big Lake is not responsible for lost items, we will do the best we can to help find it.

Homesickness: *Can it be prevented?*

Out of nearly 1,800 campers per season, Big Lake averages six campers per summer who do not stay the entire time due to homesickness. Through our many years of experience we've learned four things:

1. By watching for early signs of discomfort, homesickness is usually avoidable.
2. Once parents are out of sight, counselors and other campers come into focus and the fun starts.
3. Parents are often more uneasy about leaving their children than children are about leaving their parents. Many parents have found that they can prevent homesickness by encouraging their children to spend a night or two away from home before camp starts.
4. Parents know their children best, and in case of homesickness, we will attempt to work with you in setting up the best course of action, including a phone call, or visit as needed.

Mail and Email: *Where do I send it?*

Camper mail is delivered to and picked up from Big Lake daily. We highly recommend sending mail via UPS or USPS. Historically, FedEx has not delivered mail reliably to Big Lake. We also encourage you not to overnight packages. Due to our location, we sometimes don't receive packages shipped overnight in the time frame promised by UPS.

Camper's Name and Session (ex: Teen 1, Ultimate RAD, etc.)
C/O Big Lake Youth Camp
26435 Big Lake Rd
Sisters, OR 97759

If your camper is attending an off-site RAD camp, please write the name of the camp clearly on the package so that we can get it to them when they return to camp.

One-way emails are available for purchase in blocks of 5 for \$5. You can send emails Monday through Thursday through the registration account, by using the **E-mail a Camper** link. Please understand that printing and distributing email is a labor intensive activity for our staff. We ask that you send no more than one email per day.

While emails are nice, campers are generally more excited about receiving letters and packages.

Medication: *What if my camper needs their medication while at camp?*

Prescription medication needing to be taken by campers while at camp are required to be dispensed from the original pharmacy container with instructions for use, and must refer to the individual being treated.

Medical Information: *What should I know?*

Special Note About Emergency Ambulance or Helicopter Transport

Because of Big Lake's remote location, 911 dispatch will typically send the fastest transport available. Sometimes that is a helicopter, even when the injury is not life-threatening. This can cost a great deal. BLYC insurance (\$5,000 of coverage) would be maxed out on just the transport if that situation were to occur (the helicopter transport alone is in excess of \$10,000.00). Therefore, we suggest that you consult your personal insurance policy to see how much it will cover. These are a couple supplemental options with advertised costs less than \$100 per family per year:

1. Purchase a family membership with **Life Flight** at <http://www.lifeflight.org>
2. Purchase a family membership with **AirMedCare** at <https://www.amcnrep.com/>

Medical Staff:

The camp has a full-time Oregon-licensed RN on site who is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for all medical needs. We also have a physician present at camp. Our nurse cares for the distribution of needed medications at each meal. It is very important that your camper's health history form is completed before check-in. This is to ensure that our trained medical staff are able to administer any needed medicine or care to your camper throughout the week.

BLYC's Health Management Practices:

Big Lake Youth Camp is committed to safety and wellness. We place a high priority on this commitment. A solid medical team is in place each week to greet your campers and meet their health needs. We endeavor to learn from you a complete health history of your camper. We also screen each camper as they arrive at camp to be fully aware of any medical needs and issues. These are shared with the appropriate staff such as the counselors as well as the entire medical team. While we are not a special needs camp, we are willing on an individual basis to discuss your specific concerns and help your camper have a successful week. The medical team will communicate with parents during the week as needed. We appreciate your trust in the medical team and will serve you to the best of our ability.

Medical Coverage:

Big Lake has a medical/dental insurance policy for each camper that covers any injury occurring at camp requiring medical/dental attention away from camp covering up to \$5,000 per incident. There is also an excess insurance policy in place for up to \$25,000 per incident. More information will be provided, if needed. If your child has received treatment away from camp, a form will be sent home with the camper with instructions on how to process the claim.

Parent Notification if Medical Issues Arise:

If a medical issue arises, parents will be notified at the discretion of the medical team. What guides us as we determine when to call is the nature and severity of the illness or injury, and our involvement in resolving it. We aim to keep parents aware of our concerns early on so that they will be able to understand our intervention and plan the follow-up accordingly. Minor issues will be cared for without notifying parents. If a concern is lingering at the conclusion of camp, a letter will be sent home with the camper including a full disclosure of our intervention and, if applicable, what we feel will be needed in follow-up. If the need arises for transport to a higher level of care, a call will be placed to the parents to notify them accordingly.

Mosquitoes: Can bites be prevented?

We do our best. However, in the early summer, mosquitoes are a reality at Big Lake. While the snow is melting and the seasonal wetlands still exist, mosquitoes are present. The mosquito season is typically short. The mosquitoes are not bad in the day-time activity areas but can be a nuisance in the evenings. ***Please send the repellent of your choice with your camper.*** We further request all campers wear long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toed shoes to the evening Campfire program during mosquito season, and counselors apply repellent to the face and hands of all campers before Campfire.

Personal Property: Where to keep it?

Any personal equipment that is brought to camp should be in good working condition and will be kept in the camper's cabin unless space doesn't allow, in which case it will be kept in the appropriate camp department area. Personal equipment and sports equipment (e.g. bikes, helmets, wakeboards, PFDs, etc.) may only be used with the permission of the camper's counselor and otherwise should remain stored. Big Lake Youth Camp will not be held liable for loss or damage.

Search & Seizure: What will happen?

Should camp administration suspect items listed on our [What Not to Pack List](#), camp reserves the right to search campers' belongings and seize anything prohibited. Any legal items taken will be given back to the camper prior to leaving camp.

Refund Policy: What if my camper can't go?

Refunds, less a \$75 processing fee, will be given until midnight 14 days prior to camp. If the cancellation request is made within 14 days prior to camp, a 50% refund will be issued on all camp fees.

Photos & Email: *Can I see what my camper is doing?*

We are happy to provide you the opportunity to check up on what is happening at camp while your camper is at Big Lake. By logging into the registration account, and clicking on **Additional Options**, then **Photo Gallery**, you will be able to see a variety of pictures throughout the week as well as having the option to purchase those pictures, including your camper’s **cabin photo**. We will also post pictures on our **Facebook and Instagram accounts**, so make sure to follow us to see the latest photos.

Under **Additional Options**, you will also be able to purchase a slot of 5 **one-way** emails. This option is only for sending emails to your camper, not for your camper to reply to yours. We do encourage families to send packages and snail-mail letters as the campers enjoy having their names called out during line call.

Pick-up & Drop-off “at Camp” Times: *What time do I need to pick-up on Friday or drop-off on Sunday?*

You will receive an email telling you what cabin your camper is in and that cabin is in a group which is assigned a specific time line to pick-up or drop-off. If you still haven’t received an email by the Friday before your camper is to come to camp, reach out to headquarters@biglake.org or call the camp office at (503) 850-3562.

Vegetarian Meals: *What will my camper eat?*

Your camper will enjoy three healthy meals each day during their stay at Big Lake. Meals served are vegetarian, camper-friendly, but do include eggs, cheese, and dairy products. Nutritional balance is always considered. We can accommodate those who have some allergies, food sensitivities, or dietary restrictions, but our kitchen is not celiac-friendly. Please note any special requests during the registration process and on the health history form so our food service team can prepare appropriately.

Sample Menu for a Day

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
French toast	Spaghetti	Bean & cheese burritos
Seasonal fruit	Marinara sauce	Sour cream & salsa
Breakfast potatoes	Garlic bread	Black beans
Scrambled eggs	Steamed broccoli	Rice
Oatmeal	Salad	Corn chips
Cold cereal	Brownie	Grapes
Milk/orange juice		

Shower Time: Showers at Big Lake are limited to three (3) minutes due to the processing capacity of our septic system. A couple of ways campers can come to camp prepared for this are, 1-make a game out of practicing 3-minute showers at home, and/or, 2-mix shampoo and conditioner into one bottle.

Transportation: Option 1) Campers can be dropped off at camp on Sunday as in the past. We ask that you adhere to the drop off time window that will be emailed to you by the Friday before your camper comes to camp. REG campers being dropped off the same day as RAD campers in their car, do not have to wait to be checked-in to camp. Everyone can be checked-in at the same time.

Transportation - see Transportation Parent Pack for more detailed information: Option 2) Chartered bus service to/from camp from Gladstone and Salem. Space is limited, so we ask that if you are interested in your camper riding the bus, don't wait to sign them up and save their spot. The cost for this service is \$69 each way, \$138 for a round-trip.

Any additions/changes to **Sunday** bus transportation after Wednesday 12 p.m. before your camper is at camp, will incur a \$25 administrative fee, as well as any additions/changes after your camper is at camp.

Visiting Camp: *When can I visit?*

We appreciate your interest in Big Lake! Since your camper will be with us Sunday through Friday, we ask that you limit your visiting to Sunday drop-off or Friday pick-up time. Should you need to pick a camper up early, please make arrangements with our camp office at headquarters@biglake.org or call the camp office at (503) 850-3562.

Weather at Big Lake: *How should my camper prepare?*

Summer days are generally warm (80s) and nights are delightfully cool (40s). Trees provide shade for a good portion of our camp, nestled on the eastern shore of Big Lake. Central Oregon is known for outstanding camping and recreational opportunities. Occasionally we do have rain or thunderstorms, so do pack a warm jacket.

What to Pack: *What should my camper bring (or not)?*

*****PLEASE PUT CAMPER'S NAME ON ALL ITEMS*****

- Bath towel & washcloth
- Beach towel
- Bible
- Camera (separate from phone)
- Closed-toed shoes & socks (*required*)
- Comb/brush
- Everyday clothes (*including something with long sleeves*)
- Flashlight
- Flip flops for the shower
- Hand sanitizer (pocket-size)
- Insect repellent
- Laundry bag
- Long pants/jeans (*required*)
- Swimsuit (*no bikinis or speedos, please—see dress code section*)
- Pajamas
- Pillow
- Sleeping bag
- Soap, shampoo & conditioner
- Sunscreen
- Sweater/Jacket (*evening temps can get down in the 40s*)
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Underwear
- Water bottle

What NOT to Pack:

- Cell phones, or other electronic devices: Cell phones and other media devices are not allowed at camp in order to protect the privacy of all campers and to prevent campers from immersing in a screen instead of in the camp environment and community. Camper phones will be kept in a secure location in each cabin.
- Jewelry, or any other valuable items: due to safety and security issues, we request that expensive jewelry be left at home.
- Fireworks, matches, or lighters: flames of all kinds are banned at camp during the summer months.
- Drugs, cigarettes, vapes, or alcohol
- Knives, utility tools, or weapons of any kind
- Pets

Fun Tradition:

T-shirt Thursdays are a special day at camp when the legendary Mr. Freezy comes down from Mt. Washington to give everyone wearing a Big Lake t-shirt a free Otter Pop!

Ways You Can Help

Big Lake Youth Camp has been making summers epic since 1962. The ministry of Big Lake continues to inspire thousands of campers, staff, families, and friends each year. Here are ways you can help continue Big Lake's legacy:

- **Abba's Child Donations:** Help fund Big Lake's Abba's Child program, a one-week overnight camp featuring support-based counseling for kids who have had an immediate family member pass away.
- **Campership Fund Donations:** We believe that no child should be turned away from camp because of finances. Our Brandon Moor Memorial Endowment Campership Fund, made possible through the generosity of friends of Big Lake, is available to any family seeking financial assistance. If you know of someone who could use assistance, have them call our office. Donations to this fund are greatly appreciated all year long. Thank you for investing in young people!
- **Donate Your Vehicle:** We are in search of vehicles for camp use and are mainly interested in 3/4-ton SUV's, 12-passenger vans, crew cab trucks, and small AWD SUV/wagons, but will gladly take any donated vehicle. Please contact Randy at (503) 850-3576 or randy@biglake.org to donate.
- **Unrestricted General Donations:** These funds are used to fund Big Lake's Wish List items, which currently include a horse barn rebuild, challenge course, climbing gym, and updated equipment.
- **Other Items:** Big Lake's equipment receives a lot of wear and tear due to the high volume of summer campers and fall and winter rental groups. We currently need a new tractor.

You may make donations online at <https://biglake.org/support>, or mail a check, payable to Big Lake Youth Camp, to our business office at the address below. Please use the memo line to let us know where to apply your donation.

Big Lake Youth Camp
19800 Oatfield Rd
Gladstone OR 97027



BIG LAKE
YOUTH CAMP

Thank you for helping make Big Lake Youth Camp
a great place to be!

Directions to Camp

To reach Big Lake Youth Camp, turn off of Highway 20 at the Big Lake/Hoodoo Ski Area sign and follow the road signs to the camp located on the eastern shore of Big Lake, about 4 miles from Highway 20.

Big Lake Youth Camp is a 2.5-3 hour drive from the Portland, OR area. Many parents go on to the nearby town of Sisters after dropping off or picking up campers.

