



**Your Health Form
must be returned
before your child can
come to camp!**

Resident Camp Handbook



**Watkins Glen, New York
607-535-6812
www.hiddenvalley4hcamp.org**

Dear Camp Parents,

Welcome To Hidden Valley 4-H Camp! This is going to be a special time for your camper. Please review this entire handbook, and talk with your child about what they can expect from their week at camp. They are likely to have lots of questions, and with this guide in hand, you will be ready for them.

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Section 1: Preparing For Camp

A Day At Camp

Sample schedule for a day at camp:

7:00am — Wake Up	2:15pm — Activity Period 3
8:00am — Morning Flag/Arrival	3:30pm — Activity Period 4
8:20am — Breakfast/Quads/Change	4:45pm — Free Swim/Free Time
9:15am — Activity Period 1	5:15pm — Change/Pack-up
10:30am — Activity Period 2	5:30pm — Dinner/Camp Store
12:00pm — Lunch/Camp Store	6:30pm — Evening Flag/Mail Call
1:15pm — Rest Hour	7:00pm — Evening Activity/All Camp Activity
2:00 — Afternoon Flag	

Sample Menu

Breakfast (sample):

Cereal, Yogurt, Muffins, Coffee Cake, Pancakes, French Toast, Sausage, Pastries, Juice, Milk

Dinner (sample):

Pizza, Lasagna, Tacos, Hot Dogs, Tossed Salad, Soup, Grilled Cheese, Veggie Burgers, Veggie Chili

We also offer Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwiches as an option at each lunch and dinner. Fresh fruits and healthy snacks will be available throughout the day and once in the evening in the dining hall.

Lunch (sample):

Spaghetti, Sandwiches, Sloppy Joes, Chicken Tenders, Ravioli, Salad Bar, Vegetables

Pack Your Bags

Label Everything and pack it in an easy-to-carry duffel bag or suitcase. Occasionally campers will leave belongings behind after they leave camp. Having your property labeled helps to ensure that you will be able to claim your items. We reserve the right to inspect any belongings on camp property.

Clothing at Camp: Socks and shoes must be always worn at camp, except for water activities. Use discretion when choosing camp clothes. Modest Clothing should be always worn at camp.

Inappropriate language or graphics on clothing is not acceptable. Please remember the camp experience can often be very hard on clothes. We suggest that you do not bring brand new clothing or high-priced items because they can be damaged during a week at camp. Camp is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Dietary Needs: From time to time, we have families contact us about bringing in special foods to accommodate specific medical/dietary needs. If you have such dietary needs and would prefer to provide your own meals for your child. Please contact the camp office so we may put you in contact with our Food Service Director.

Please Bring:

- Pillow and Pillowcase
- Sheets for Single-bed and Sleeping Bag or Blanket
- Towels and Washcloth
- Socks (*pack extra socks*) and Underwear
- Shirts
- Sweatshirt or Sweater
- Jacket Shorts and Long Pants
- Pajamas
- Raincoat/Poncho
- Bathing Suit
- Flip-Flops (for the pool, and shower only)
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Sunscreen (staff can assist with spray/pump dispensers, not lotions)
- Closed-toed Shoes or Sneakers
- Soap and Shampoo
- Hairbrush or Comb
- Toothbrush and Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Flashlight with Extra Batteries
- Old Pair of Shoes for Wet Hikes

Specific Program Suggestions:

- Campers may bring their own fishing pole to use. Camp also has a supply
- Camp will provide Archery equipment for campers enrolled in those classes. Do not bring these from home.

Think Twice Before Packing the Cell Phone

Cell phones are not permitted at camp. Camp is an exciting opportunity for children to build a sense of independence and we encourage them to focus on their camp experience. Cell Phones, like many other modern technologies, are expensive possessions which can easily be lost or damaged with in the course of a week at camp. Please do not send your child to camp with a cell phone.



Optional

\$30-\$40 for Camp Store
Stamped Envelopes
Writing Paper and Pen/Pencil
Inexpensive Camera
Insect Repellent

Please Do Not Bring:

Cell Phones
MP3 Players
Handheld Video Games
Spray Cans
Knives
Candle or Lanterns
Food, Candy, or Gum
Weapons of any kind
Expensive Jewelry

Note: Campers who bring any of the above items to camp will be asked to surrender them to the camp staff, and may face further disciplinary action. Camp is not responsible for confiscated items.



Rustic Living

Hidden Valley 4-H Camp is located in the scenic Watkins Glen State Park, with a mixture of forests, fields, streams and lakes. Campers should embrace the opportunity to disconnect from their electronics and reconnect with nature and friends.

Because we are a rustic camp program, campers should not be surprised to find the occasional chipmunk scurry under the cabin, or a spider in the bathrooms. Bugs can also be found at camp, and we suggest that your camper pack a non-aerosol bug repellent.

Weather

- ◆ Average temperatures at camp in July and August range from 61°F and 82°F.
- ◆ On average, camp has about 10 days of full sun and 14 days of partial sunny days during the 6 weeks of camp.
- ◆ On average, camp has about 13 days of rain in 6 weeks of camp.



Camp Check-In

The bags are packed, the car is loaded, and the kids are ready! Here is a quick rundown of what to expect when you arrive at Hidden Valley 4H Camp. Resident camp check-in runs (2:00pm till 3:30pm) on Sunday. If you will not be able to arrive during this time, please contact our office to make other arrangements.

- ◆ When arriving at Hidden Valley, please help us keep our camp safe by watching for pedestrians and following the 5 mph speed limit. Parking is provided in the parking lot or on the inner grass area of our circular driveway.
- ◆ Unload your camper's belongings and bring them to the dining hall at camp.
- ◆ As you enter the dining hall, there will be several stations set up to guide you through the process. At Station One, you will receive your cabin assignment, and confirm that all your paperwork and payments have been received.
- ◆ At Station Two, you will have the opportunity to discuss any medical concerns regarding your child with the Health Supervisor. The Health Supervisor will collect any medications for your child at this time (medications must be provided in their original containers). NY State Health Code requires that all medication be stored in the Infirmary. This includes any pain relievers, cold medicines, or other over-the-counter medications, as well as prescription medications. For more information regarding medications, please refer to the Medical Information and Guidelines.
- ◆ The last step of the check-in process is going to the cabin and meeting the counselor(s) who will be with your child for the week!
- ◆ Any changes to our drop-off or pick-up procedures will be done through text or email using UltraCamp. To ensure you get the most up-to-date information from camp, make sure your phone number and email are up to date in UltraCamp.

Services

Camp Store

We carry a variety of Hidden Valley branded T-shirts, water bottles, and other souvenirs. We also sell snack foods. Parents will be able to visit the camp store on departure days, and campers will typically visit the camp store at least once each day during the week. If you would like your child to be able to make purchases in the store, you will have the opportunity to add money to the camp store during registration and during the check in process.

The camp store does not provide refunds of any money not used at the camp store so plan accordingly. Campers and parents will have a final opportunity to spend surplus camp store money on Friday during pickup. Funds left at the camp store will be used for camp programming.

Laundry:

Please plan to pack enough clothes for your child's complete stay. Camp staff will launder items if circumstances require.

Religion:

Hidden Valley 4-H Camp does not endorse any religious affiliation.

Mail:

We encourage campers to write letters home during the week. Mail is taken to the post office each day. Please send your child with enough self-addressed, stamped envelopes. Additionally, the camp store has stamps and postcards available for sale. For sending your camper mail, see the section "Contacting Your Child at Camp".

Refund Policy

All payments for camper weeks must be paid in full 10 days prior to the week your camper is attending. We reserve the right to cancel your camper's attendance if the balance is not paid in full.

A nonrefundable deposit of \$150 is required to reserve your spot at camp. (Refunds will only be considered for cancellations due to Covid-19, you will either receive a refund or you will be given the option to reserve a spot for 2024.)

Transportation

Resident Campers may be participating in programs and master camps that will require riding a bus. For example the optional Watkins Glen Hike. During the bus ride the campers will be required to follow these rules.

Bus Safety Rules:

- ◆ Campers are always to remain seated with hands and arms inside the bus.
- ◆ Seat belts are to be fastened – one person per seat belt. (if provided)
- ◆ Noise levels must remain at a level that will not distract the driver. There will be no throwing of objects or other disruptive behavior.
- ◆ Passengers will enter and leave the bus under the direction of a staff member and/or driver. If the vehicle makes an emergency stop, campers should follow directions of staff member and/or driver and use the buddy system if leaving the bus.
- ◆ Persons in wheelchairs are to be either seat belted in their wheelchair that is in a locked position and secured to the vehicle or transferred to a vehicle seat and to wear a seat belt.

Camp Staff may provide transportation in emergency situations. If there is a medical emergency requiring professional medical attention, or if your child becomes ill at camp, a staff member will call to inform you of the situation.

Preparing Children For The Summer Camp Experience

Reprinted with permission from the American Camp Association

"Summer camp is more than a vacation for children," says Bruce Muchnick, Ed.D., a licensed psychologist who works extensively with day and resident camps. "As a parent, there are a few things to consider to increase the opportunity for a rewarding camp experience for your child." Some helpful suggestions provided by Dr. Muchnick and the American Camping Association include:

Consider camp as a learning experience

This is an opportunity for your child to explore a world bigger than his/her neighborhood and a chance for you and 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, learn about teamwork, be creative, and more. 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 where to go and 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.

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.

Medical Guidelines and Information

Camper Health Forms

Health forms must be completed and returned to Hidden Valley 4-H Camp. Please note that the HF2 Form: **Medication Approval must be signed by a Health Care Professional. This complete health form (pages HF1-2) should be received by June 15th. If registering after June 15th we must receive camper health documents 15 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR to your camper's arrival at camp.** Campers will not be permitted to attend camp without this form. This is required by the New York State Department of Health and must be completed in full. Returning campers must complete a new form each year. Campers returning for multiple weeks during the same year do NOT need to complete separate forms for each week.

Prescription & Non-Prescription Meds

If it is necessary for your child to receive any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) while at camp, please adhere to the following guidelines.

- ◆ **No medications will be given to campers unless a licensed physician has granted permission to do so on the camper's HF2: Medication Approval Form.**
- ◆ The physician must provide clear written instructions regarding the use of prescription medications on the Health Form or the Physical Form.
- ◆ No camper is permitted to have any medications, (prescription or over-the-counter) including vitamins, ointments or lotions of any kind (excluding insect repellents and sunscreen) without the express permission of the Health Supervisor.
- ◆ All medication (prescription or over-the-counter, including inhalers) must be packaged in their original containers and labeled correctly. Medications will not be dispensed without expiration dates. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to supply any medication other than those listed on the Health Form as available from the Infirmary with physicians authorizing signature (see below).
- ◆ Camp will have a supply of the following over-the-counter medications: Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Robitussin, and Benadryl. Please have your physician complete the appropriate section on the health form authorizing use of these medications, as needed. Our staff can not administer these medications without the appropriate physician signature.

All children with medication will be instructed on the first day of camp about the schedule for dispensing medications. Emphasize with your child the importance of taking responsibility for complying with this schedule. If a camper is due for medication and does not report to the Nurse, camp staff will be notified and the child will be sent to the Infirmary to be sure medication is administered.

Health and Safety

The camp takes every precaution to provide a safe and healthy environment for all campers. The Health Supervisor is on site to address any minor illness or injury at camp. In some cases, campers may have to remain overnight in the Infirmary to provide the best care. Parents will be notified if an illness or injury requires outside treatment. Campers requiring additional care will be transported to Schuyler County Hospital, Inc., 220 Steuben St, Montour Falls, NY 14865. Any fees for outside treatment, including ambulatory services, are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Medical Screenings

The Health Supervisor will meet with parents during check-in. The Camp Director should be notified in advance of any concerns regarding their child's special needs which would require specific attention on the part of our staff. Examples of these concerns might include hearing impairments, recent traumatic events, language barriers, learning disabilities, recent changes in medications, or situations at home which could impact your child's experience. Campers arriving to camp with pre-existing injuries or illnesses, without notifying the camp in advance, may be sent home at the discretion of the Camp Director.

Supervision Information

Our supervision ratios meet or exceed the standards established by the New York State Department of Health and the American Camp Association. Those ratios vary based on ages of campers and activity levels. For Resident Campers, engaged in active activities, we maintain a ratio of 1 staff for every 8 campers. During rest periods, the ratio allows for 1 staff to supervise up to 20 campers. We frequently exceed these standards, with more staff than necessary, to ensure a safe living environment.

Waterfront activities require 1 lifeguard for every 25 swimmers in the water.

Section 2: During Camp

Contacting Your Child At Camp

Mail:

You may mail letters to your camper by sending them to our main office in Montour Falls. Please note that large packages often do not arrive on time and recommend only sending letters that can be easily be returned to sender if they arrive after the week your camper has attended. Please mail all letters to:

Hidden Valley 4-H Camp
C/O Camper Name
323 Owego St #5
Montour Falls, NY 14865

Telephone:

Camp's telephone line services the Camp Director's office, the Health Supervisor, the kitchen, the program office. It is important for the safety of all campers that these lines are available for business use. For this reason, we ask that you refrain from calling camp unless there is an emergency requiring your child's immediate attention. Non-emergency calls can be made to the Camp Office at (607) 535-5048.

Visiting Camp:

We believe camp provides an opportunity for youth to acquire self-reliance, and confidence through achievement in a new environment. We ask that parents/guardians refrain from visiting campers during their stay, unless there is an emergency. Any persons visiting camp, for any reason, must report to the camp office and check in with the Camp Director upon arrival. At no time are outside visitors permitted on the property without checking in with the Camp Director. Our staff are advised to address any unknown persons on the property, and escort them to the camp office. This is a measure we take for the safety of all campers.

Early Departure/Temporary Absence:

Occasionally, parents need to pick up their child early or temporarily remove them from camp for outside commitments (family emergency, sports, music etc). We ask that parents planning to remove their child from camp outside of the normal camper pick-up times please contact the Camp Director to make arrangements. A note from the parent/guardian, clarifying the days and times that the camper will be out of camp, is requested in such instances. With adequate advance notice, our staff will have the child ready for dismissal (belongings packed if not returning to camp) upon your arrival.



Camper Pickup

Camp will wrap up on Friday afternoon at 4:00 PM. Parents should plan to be at camp between 4 - 6 PM. Parents will need to see their child's counselors to sign out their children. Please understand this security is intended to protect the safety of your child. Please do not take your camper until you have signed them out. Make sure to pick up any medications from the Camp Nurse before leaving camp.

Camper Evacuation

In case of emergency requiring an evacuation of camp, parents will be informed via phone or email about any changes in location or time that a child needs to be picked up.

Health Form Instructions

Important:


NEW IN 2022 - We will no longer accept **ANY** forms/paperwork through email - we are using the secure online Document Center in Ultra Camp along with built in, integrated forms within the Registration System.

- ◆ Health Form page one is to be filled out and must be signed by a Parent or Guardian with in UltraCamp Document Center.
- ◆ Health Form two must be completed and signed by a Provider. Please download the form from the UltraCamp document center. Work with your provider and upload the form by June 15th.
- ◆ **Up-to-date Physicals** - Our Department of Health requires a physical to be within two years of the date your child is attending camp. A physical requires a provider signature or stamp. Please up load a copy to the document Center in UltraCamp.

Other Forms In Document Center:

Media Permission: We have a wonderful photography program and our campers take photos all the time. We often like to post pictures on our Facebook page throughout the summer. We need you to fill out this form so we can use our photos. If you do not sign the form, we will not post pictures of your child.

Acknowledgment of Risk: This form is required by our Risk Management firm. It's lets us know that you understand the risks of sending your child to camp. Our activities are safe and our staff is well trained in Risk Management prior to camp opening.

Camper Code of Conduct: This needs to be reviewed and signed by you and your child. We are very proud of the 4-H Clover Logo  and what it means to our camp. Head, Heart, Hands and Health. It is important to us that campers gain the life skills that we incorporate into all of our programs. We expect campers to honor the Clover through respectful, compassionate, cooperative and caring behaviors.

Meningococcal Form: This form is for those campers staying longer than 6 overnight days. (For Example: A camper who stays one week plus a weekend)

If you register for Camp after **June 15th** we must receive camper health documents **15 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR** to your camper's arrival at camp. You will need to use the Document Center in UltraCamp.

Please complete all forms in UltraCamp:

Thank You

Supporting Your Child While At Camp

Your child is away at camp, and you hope that they are having the best time of their lives. But we know that you are feeling nervous that maybe they're not. Homesickness is a concern for both campers and parents alike, and it's something that we deal with on a regular basis at 4-H Camp. For many campers, it may be their first time away from home. For parents, it may be the first time they've been away from their children for more than a day or two. A sense of separation anxiety is common for many families with a child at camp. Please understand that if you are feeling this tension, you are not alone!

- ◆ Recognize that our staff are trained and highly skilled in identifying and addressing homesickness concerns. On average, almost 95% of campers experience some level of missing home, but only 1 in 5 children have an elevated level of homesickness. It may be reassuring to know that less than 1% of all campers need to return home due to severe homesickness.
- ◆ No news is good news. If you haven't heard from our Camp Director, you can safely assume that all is well at camp. Cabin counselors are trained to work with early signs of homesickness directly. When homesickness becomes more significant, counselors know how to reach out for help. Our Camp Director will work directly with certain campers to help them through their difficult times. On occasion, if our staff finds it necessary, we will contact the parents to ask for your support in addressing the issue. In such cases, you will receive a phone call from our staff, without the camper present, advising you of the situation and letting you know what we are doing to help your child. We try to reach out before homesickness elevates to a critical level, and this phone call is simply for your information. If the situation continues, we may call you again when your child is present, and allow you to speak directly with your camper. We ask for your support in such situations. Please avoid telling the child that you will pick them up right away if they want to come home. Children who expect to leave camp early have a very difficult time allowing themselves to adjust to camp and enjoy their experience.
- ◆ Write letters to your camper. Getting mail makes campers feel loved and remembered. Personal letters or postcards from home renew the connection with home. You may want to send the first letter a day or two before camp, so that it arrives on the first day of camp. You may also write the letter at home and deliver it to your child's cabin counselor on the first day of camp. In your letters, ask your child about camp and encourage them to write back. Focus on asking questions about all the fun activities they're enjoying, friends their making, and so on. Avoid telling them the things going on at home, which may make them feel they are missing out.
- ◆ If you receive a homesick letter during the first few days of camp, please understand that our staff often encourage children to write letters when they are homesick as a way to establish that connection with home. Chances are, by the time you receive the letter, your child has already overcome their homesickness, and are truly loving camp. Resist the urge to immediately call the camp and pick up your child. Rather, take a moment to write a letter in reply. You are welcome to send an email, using Bunk Mail (See Contacting Your Child At Camp, Section 2) for a speedier reply. Let your child know that you are proud of them. Validate their feelings, and consider sharing a story of a time that you might have felt the same way. Let them know how you survived your own experiences.
- ◆ We don't allow cell phones at camp, for a variety of reasons (See Packing List, Section 1). Yet some families choose to send phones to camp so that campers will be able to call mom or dad when they are feeling homesick. It is our policy to collect cell phones. If you are expecting a phone call from your child's cell phone, and don't receive one, do not panic. It doesn't mean that something terrible has happened. It typically means that either your child is having a great time and doesn't feel the need to call home, or that the phone has been turned in to the Camp Director for safe keeping until the end of the week.

Section 3: Returning Home

Lost And Found

Try as we might, sometimes there are personal belongings left at camp after the campers go home. If you find that your child is missing an item they brought to camp, please contact the camp office at (607) 535-5047 as soon as possible. At the end of each week all lost and found items are collected and stored at camp. Any belongings not claimed by the end of the camping season will be donated to local charities.

Medications Left at Camp:

Any medications that you provided to the Camp Nurse upon check-in are returned to you when you pick up your child at camp. Please be sure to remember to check with our Camp Nurse during checkout to collect any prescription or over-the-counter medications. If you return home and discover that you forgot to pick up your medications, please contact the Camp Office as soon as possible to claim them. Medications not picked up by the end of the camping season will be disposed of through an Old Medications Collection Program.

When They Come Home

By Bob Ditter, L.C.S.W

It is probably difficult to imagine, as you scan the “packing list,” count socks, get the trunk out, and make sure your child’s name is on everything they are taking, what your son or daughter might be like when they come home from the summer adventure at camp—the adventure for which you are working so hard to get them ready. Indeed, for many parents the send-off requires enough emotional and logistical effort that there is no time to think about where all this work might lead. So allow me to give you some idea of what to expect on the other end of the calendar when your child returns from camp. It just might help, as you get them ready, to have a “big picture” reminder of what this endeavor is all about.

Expect your child to be tired. Not just physically tired, but emotionally tired. You see, camp in its best form engages children not just in activities, but as active members of a community. What does this mean? Your child is about to acquire several “brothers” or “sisters” they will then have to share everything with—personal space; the counselor’s attention; time; fun; laughter; decision-making; clean-up (yes, chores!); some of their own personal possessions; and each other’s friends. This requires a level of negotiating and give-and-take that most children do not experience in any place but camp!

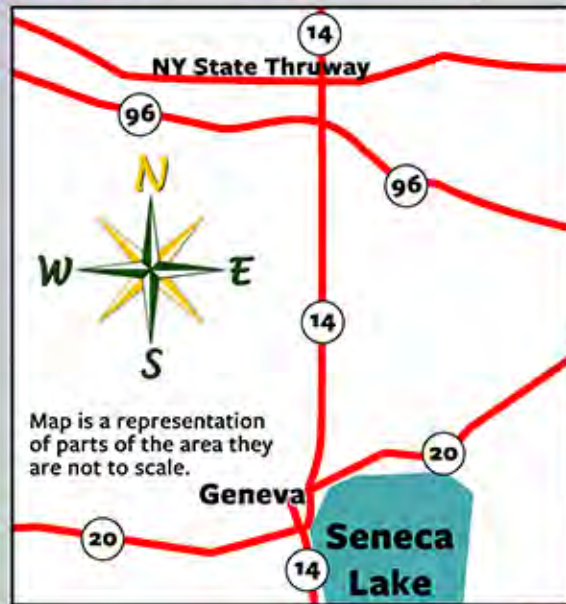
This experience alone pays dividends. I have parents who have told me their child was so much more cooperative at home after camp. Or that they got along better with their siblings after camp. Or that they now eat a broader range of foods or keep their room clean. Perhaps the most common comment I hear is that their children seem somehow calmer after coming home from camp, which almost seems puzzling to some parents. Where does this calm come from? Once you have the knowledge that you can successfully handle yourself—that you can negotiate with your peers and hold your own and compromise and find out it’s just fine—it gives you a sense of confidence that is, well, just calming.

Your child may also be a bit sad after camp. If camp is anything, it is intense. Many children make some of their best friends at camp. Leaving that rich social environment where you learn you can do things of which you never thought you were capable imparts a temporary emptiness. I call it the August blues. Oh, after a good sleep and a nice dinner, they’ll perk up. My advice to you as a parent is, keep that first day or two after camp a bit low key. Have it be a time of family reunion. The stories and the songs and the sayings and the new wisdom will gradually come out, and as they do, it is as if your child will suddenly realize all that she has brought home from her camp experience.

And as they reminisce, you may find yourself surprised at the mature young person you are listening to, asking yourself, as many parents have told me they ask themselves: “When did she get so grown up?!” At camp, of course!

Bob Ditter is a noted child, adolescent, and family therapist in Boston, Massachusetts. He is a regular contributor for the American Camp Association, and frequently speaks at conferences.

Directions To Camp



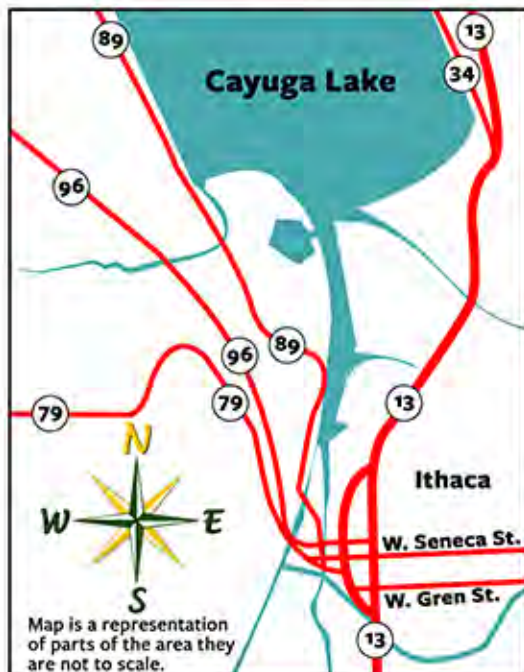
From points North of Watkins Glen:

Take the NYS Thruway (I-90) east to Geneva, Exit 42. Take Route 14 South (35 miles) into Watkins Glen. In Watkins Glen, take a right onto Route 329. Follow Route 329 2.7 miles and take a right onto Whites Hollow Road. Hidden Valley Camp signs are at the bottom of the hill; bear left into camp.



From points South of Watkins Glen:

Take I-86/ Route 17 West to Elmira. Exit 54 - Main Street turns into Route 14 North to Watkins Glen. When you've reached Watkins Glen, turn left onto Route 329 (just before the State Park entrance), follow Route 329 approximately 2.7 miles and take a right onto Whites Hollow Road. Hidden Valley Camp signs are at the bottom of the hill, bear left into camp.



From Ithaca:

Take Route 79W and follow it through Burdett; it will merge with Route 414S approximately 2 miles south of Burdett. Follow Route 414S into Watkins Glen, and take a left onto Route 414S & 14S/Franklin Street. Go 7 blocks, just past the entrance to Watkins Glen State Park, take a right onto Route 329.

Follow Route 329 approx. 2.7 miles and take a right onto Whites Hollow Rd. Hidden Valley Camp signs are at the bottom of the hill; bear left into camp.

Packing Your Bags

You've Registered! Now What?!?

- ◆ There is a reason we have a list of things to bring, and not to bring to Camp. Seriously, if it's on the do-not-bring list, leave it at home.
- ◆ If your child can fit inside their own suitcase, it might be too large. Campers will need to keep their bags under the bunk beds, which are 12" high. If you bring a trunk that doesn't fit, they will need to put them against the wall, which takes up a lot of precious space in the cabins.
- ◆ Prepare for the weather. If the forecast is calling for rain, pack some extra clothes. If it's going to be chilly, pack a sweatshirt. If it's going to be hot, pack lightweight clothing. We do everything we can to keep your campers safe, but we try not to cancel activities because of the weather. Unless lightning... and then, well... yeah.
- ◆ Please do not bring cell phones. Don't hide them inside their suitcases. Don't stuff them inside a favorite toy. Don't send them with extra phones so they can turn one in. We've seen it all, but it's important to trust us to take care of your children without needing them to contact you (or their friends) throughout the week. Sneaking phones in to camp teaches your child to disregard the rules, and that you don't think they can handle being away for a week. What is way more helpful is to prepare them for their week at camp so that they won't feel the need to call you 15 times a day.
- ◆ Let your camper help to pack their own bags. They will be more aware of what is in them, and why it's there.
- ◆ Label absolutely everything. Shirts, pants, underwear, socks, flashlights, water bottles, everything. We collect more than a garbage bag full of things left behind, every single week.

Missing Home

Avoiding that "Homesick" Feeling

Most campers, especially first-time campers, will miss home for the first day or two. That's totally normal! We are trained professionals; we know all the tips and tricks to help campers make connections early in the week to help adjust to Camp.

- ◆ Please don't promise your child that they can call home whenever they want to. We generally try to avoid having campers call home. Camp is all about trying new things and pushing comfort zones. Many children will experience a level of discomfort and if they've been told they can call home, they often don't try to push through the little bit of discomfort. They'd rather call you and ask to go home. Don't panic, if your child is really struggling, camp will call you to get your help in ensuring they have a great time.
- ◆ If you're writing a letter, postcard, bunknote (email), etc, avoid telling your child about all the fun things you're doing without them, or how much you miss them. This will leave them feeling guilty for being away. Instead, tell them how proud you are of them for being at camp. And how you can't wait to hear all about what they've been up to. Update them on sports scores for their favorite team, or send them a riddle or a few corny jokes.



Medical

No one wants to think about it, but...

- ◆ If I could ask just ONE thing, it would be this: Fill out your health form as if your child is in the ER right now, and we can't reach you. Leaving information off the form puts your child's care in jeopardy in the very unlikely event that we need to provide medical care for them. It is surprising how often we try to reach parents for a variety of reasons and can't reach anyone.
- ◆ If your child needs medications (including over the counter), you will need the doctor's signature on your HF3 Form. Without this precaution, we are not permitted to provide your child with a Tylenol, should they get a headache, or Benadryl, should they find some poison ivy. This is NYS law. We know paperwork isn't fun, but ultimately, this is for your child's protection. Please be sure the HF3 form is completed by a doctor's office and signed.
- ◆ Any medications you bring need to be in their original containers. Prescriptions need to have labels on them with dosing instructions. Again, not our fault. We're just following the rules.
- ◆ If your child is using medications at school to stay focused, chances are they will need those meds at camp too. "Medication Vacations" are a real thing but putting your child on a medicine vacation while they're at camp is just asking for trouble. Please don't do that to your child.
- ◆ We know that food allergies are a big scary thing when you aren't the one cooking for your child. Our Food Service Director has been feeding kids for many years. Please let us know about any food allergies as soon as possible, and know that we take these very seriously. Your child will be doing activities they may never have done before, using muscles they didn't even know they had. Be prepared for skinned knees/elbows, or sprained knees/elbows, and sore muscles.
- ◆ Make sure that your child knows how to apply the bug spray and sunscreen you are sending. Staff can help with sprays, but we can't assist with lotions or creams.
- ◆ Please know that we can accommodate nearly anything, if we know about it up front. While your child is at camp, we are acting as their parents, so having as much information as possible just helps us do our jobs. We're on your side! Please don't keep secrets from us!

Pick Up and Drop Off

Just a Few Thoughts

- ◆ At Drop-Off, hug them, tell them you know they are going to have a great day/week, tell them how proud you are of them... and then leave. Do not linger. If they are crying, know that the crying will last approximately 38 seconds after you leave, and we get a chance to distract them with something fun.
- ◆ Please be respectful of pick-up and drop off times unless prior arrangements have been made with us. Many parents arrive far too early and we are not prepared to give their child our full attention. Likewise, if you need to pick up earlier than then stated pick-up time, let us know so that we can have your child packed and ready to go.

And A Few More!

- ◆ There is a reason we ask for all your paperwork two weeks after you register. When you arrive at camp, we want to focus on them, not on collecting late paperwork and payment.
- ◆ Overnight skills such as showering and getting dressed by themselves are important. It's great if your child can practice these skills before camp with a sleepover at grandma and grandpa's house, or at a friends place.
- ◆ There are going to be bugs! Bring some bug spray, but don't let the bugs ruin your day!