

Essential Functions of a Camper

Essential Outdoor Functions: To be successful at Fells Forest Camp, Campers need to...

- **Be comfortable around worms, bugs, and insects.** Camp is in a forest setting, so there is never a lack of ants, spiders, mosquitos, bees, dragonflies, and other flying insects. Campers need to be okay encountering “creepy crawlies” on a regular basis. It’s even better if they’re actively excited about the opportunity!
- **Be able to maintain a positive attitude in the elements.** Our camp is a rain-or-shine program, and we spend all our time outdoors unless it is unsafe to be outside due to thunder, lightning, and high winds. Campers will need to be outside in hot humid temperatures and rain, while keeping a positive attitude.

In cases of extreme heat, there are planned opportunities for groups to rotate coming inside to cool off in an airconditioned space, but we do not have the facilities or resources to be inside all day as an entire camp.

Essential Physical Functions: To be successful at Fells Forest Camp, Campers need to...

- **Be able to hike in the woods, over uneven, rugged terrain with a backpack for at least 30 minutes at a time and should be able to walk at least 2 miles cumulatively throughout the day (about a ½ mile - 1 mile cumulatively for 4–5-year-olds).**

Groups take short rest stops and water breaks when they are walking to their sites, however they do not stop for significantly extended periods of time.

- **Go to the bathroom without diapers (fully potty trained)** and ask for bathroom breaks when needed. Campers also need to be comfortable using porta-potties, which are our bathroom facilities. Porta potties are located at our basecamp.

We understand that accidents can happen, and that is okay, but as a general policy, no child should come to camp unprepared to use the porta potties and go to the bathroom independently).

Behavioral Functions: To be successful at Fells Forest Camp, Campers need to...

- **Be able to follow the directions of their counselors**

Because of the inherently unpredictable nature of being in a forest setting, there may be times when counselors need to make in-the-moment decisions. For the safety of all campers and staff, every camper must be able to follow directions in real time, and adhere to the boundaries, rules, and expectations set by their counselors.

- **Be able to Participate safely in a 2:10 ratio (2 counselors and 10 campers).**

Campers should be able to “follow the group plan” and understand that their groupmates also deserve attention from and engagement with the counselors in the group.

- **Make an effort to self-regulate** and allow staff to help when needed.

We know campers have lots of feelings, big and small, and staff are trained to help campers express those feelings safely. It is a camper's responsibility to work with staff and allow staff to help them when things feel hard.

- **Stay with their group.** Wandering off or running away from the group in a wooded setting, particularly in a public park such as the Fells, is a significant safety concern.
If a camper needs alone time to calm down or self-regulate, counselors are happy to give them the space and time they need, as long as the camper can sit down safely where counselors can see them.
- **Maintain personal boundaries** and refrain from using teasing or threatening language or physical force against another camper or counselor.
- **Follow the Fells Forest Camp Community Values**
- **Share materials and take care of camp equipment**
Campers are expected to share materials appropriately, care for camp equipment, and treat both their own belongings and those of others with respect.
- **Be unplugged.** Our campers spend each day in a forest setting with no personal electronic devices.

