



PO Box 428 Banner Elk, NC 28604

[info@HolstonCenter.org](mailto:info@HolstonCenter.org); [www.HolstonCenter.org](http://www.HolstonCenter.org)

844-465-7866 Phone

## **OVERNIGHT CAMP HANDBOOK 2023** *A Guide for Guardians*

Holston Presbytery Camp and Retreat Center would like to extend a most sincere welcome to you and your child. We look forward to our association with you this summer and will do our best to make your child's stay a happy and rewarding experience. This handbook is intended to provide you with general information and make you feel at ease. We also have a FAQ section on our webpage. We welcome phone calls and emails if you have further questions or concerns.

**Dave Cohn, Executive Director**

**(606) 206-0336 -cell**

**dcohn@holstoncenter.org**

**Mitchell Cline, Office Manager**

**(844) 465-7866 -office**

**mcline@holstoncenter.org**

**Madeline Horne, Director of Camp Programs**

**(919) 618-5622 -cell**

**mhorne@holstoncenter.org**

### **COVID-19**

*The COVID-19 pandemic has placed unique circumstances on the social, emotional, spiritual, and physical lives of us all - but especially on our children. With increased screen time and limited peer-to-peer interaction, perhaps the need for the benefits of summer camp is greater than ever before. Holston Camp, with our specialization in family-style camping in a Christ-centered, outdoor environment, is an opportune place for children and youth to connect, discover, and grow.*

*For the past 3 Summers, Holston visioned and implemented both Day Camp and Resident Camp with no reported COVID-19 spread among campers, counselors, or staff. We followed recommendations from the American Camping Association and the CDC to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 spread. With similar policies and practices, Holston predicts a similar outcome for this upcoming summer camp season. Holston will always err on the side of caution for the safety and care of our camper families.*

*To do so, we need your help and support. Please do not send your child(ren) to camp if they have had a dry cough, sore throat, fever, shortness of breath, body aches, new loss of taste or smell, or any other symptoms related to Covid-19 in the past 48 hours.*

*Research shows that being outside combined with social distancing and mask-wearing, reduces the likelihood of transmission of viruses. Until recommendations from the CDC and ACA change, Hand-washing, and enjoying the outdoors will be our standard daily operation. With these measures in place, campers will enjoy classic Holston Camp activities; morning worship, field games, swimming, canoeing, rock-climbing, zip-lining, archery, campfires, nature play, and more.*

*Please prepare your camper with the appropriate clothing for the weather and all camp activities. **Do not send your child(ren) to camp with toys, stuffed animals, or other objects they may be tempted to share.***

*We retain the right to refuse attendance to any child showing symptoms of coronavirus (fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body pain, chills, etc.).*

*Campers will be monitored for symptoms throughout the day. Any child showing symptoms will be quarantined immediately and parent/guardian contacted to pick up the child. In this case, communication will be circulated from the camp to other parents/guardians within that camper's group that someone has been identified with symptoms. This is not a diagnosis of COVID-19, it is simply a warning that a child has shown some symptoms that are associated with COVID-19.*

*Please contact Madeline Horne if you have any questions or concerns regarding our resident camp program.*



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### **CAMP LIFE**

Campers should expect that camp will be different than home--different beds, bathrooms, food, etc. Campers will also be meeting new people. If your camper has never been here before, it may seem a strange place, but we will make every effort to help your camper feel safe and secure. Campers will be able to choose some activities and are expected to participate with the group in other activities. Campers will be grouped based on age and gender. The activities, meals, and rest time provide the framework for each group's daily routine. We want all campers to have a fun and memorable experience at camp.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Some overnight campers will participate in off-site activities. Vans will be driven by Camp Staff or volunteers who are 21 years of age or older and have a clean driving record.

### **SPENDING MONEY**

This year we will be offering candy, ice cream, snacks, and drinks at the camp store! Parents may visit the camp store at pick up, after the parent program to purchase apparel, water bottles, and other Holston Camp Swag. Campers will not be able to purchase apparel or other items during the week. Campers will not be able to purchase items on field trips.

You may leave money at check in for your child to spend throughout the week. Campers are allowed to visit the camp store each night after dinner to get a snack. Campers are only permitted to buy snacks during the week, and we do not allow campers to get more than 2 items per night. All snacks in the camp store are sold at \$2 per item. This means that within one week, your camper can only spend up to \$20. Please do not send more than \$20 with your camper. We will **NOT** be able to give camp store refunds this year. Any money left on a child's camp store account at the end of the week will be put towards camper scholarships.

### **CABIN BUDDIES**

Your camper may request a cabin mate. Please keep in mind that campers will be housed by age and gender. We cannot guarantee campers will be placed together in the event that a cabin reaches capacity.

### **CAMPER MAIL**

Mail can be an exciting highlight to a camper's day. Please write cheerful letters expressing your interest in what is happening at camp. Short happy thoughts are best. Mail can be sent prior to camp or can be provided on registration day. Please do not send food!

Camper Name & Week  
Holston Camp  
PO Box 428  
Banner Elk, NC 28604

### **TECHNOLOGY**

One of the values of Holston's programs is our "unplugged" approach. For this reason, we ask that you **DO NOT** send cell phones, smart watches, or other electronics with your camper!

If there is a problem concerning your camper, the Executive Director will contact you.



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### **CAMP PHONE CALLS**

Campers will not be able to make or receive phone calls. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CELL PHONES WITH YOUR CAMPER! If there is a problem concerning your camper, the Executive Director will contact you. In the event of an emergency at home, be prepared to leave a message for the Director or Office Manager and your call will be returned as soon as possible. If you have questions about camp, please contact us during our normal business hours: 8AM - 5PM, Mon-Fri. Emergency: (844) 465-7866 or after hours at (919) 618-5622 (Madeline's cell).

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special occasions at camp! To assure a celebration, please alert the Program Director or counselors on registration day.

### **CAMP BEHAVIOR**

Campers are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner while engaging in community activities. Holston staff are trained to provide constructive activities, positive lessons, and patient engagement with each camper. Disruptive behavior that continues to occur, impair the ability of our staff to manage the group, and create the inability for other campers to enjoy themselves will not be tolerated.

Instances of bullying, hitting, inappropriate touching, or abusive or vulgar language will result in a warning to the camper and to the parent/guardian. If the behavior continues, the parent/guardian will be asked to withdraw the camper from the camp until the Camp Director can be assured that the behavior has been modified.

Please review this information with your camper so camp is an enjoyable experience for everyone present.

### **FOOD**

Meals at camp are nutritionally balanced and prepared by qualified, experienced staff. Snacks are also provided! Please do not send snacks with your camper – food is not allowed in the cabins. Any dietary restrictions (allergies or otherwise) should be noted on the registration form so that the kitchen manager can anticipate the need. We can accommodate most dietary requirements (gluten free, lactose intolerance, nut free, etc.). If your camper has a dietary restriction and you must send food, please contact the Program Director prior to the first day of camp.

### **TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS OR ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE NOT ALLOWED**

Use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, fireworks, weapons, or illegal drugs are reasons for immediate removal from camp.

### **VALUABLES**

Please refrain from bringing valuable items to camp. They are easily lost or misplaced. Eno hammocks, clothing, and the like should be marked with the camper's name so as not to be confused with other camper's items.

### **LOST & FOUND**

All lost and found items will be kept at the camp for one week after the close of the season. When you pick up your camper, please check to make sure they have all their belongings. Call the camp immediately if you determine that something is missing. If the missing item is found, we can mail it (may incur a fee) or you may come to retrieve it. The best prevention is to label all items with your camper's name.

### **HOMESICKNESS**

Homesickness is a natural feeling that many campers experience. Usually the feeling passes in a couple of days and the camper enjoys the rest of their session. If a camper becomes homesick, the staff is supportive and helpful in overcoming these feelings, and encourages the other campers to be as well. Parents and friends can write cheerful letters of support and encouragement to help them enjoy their stay at camp. Extra special letters with comics, jokes, puzzles, etc. can be sent (see address above in "Camper Mail"). Avoid writing about stressful events at home;



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concentrate instead on questions about camp activities, buddies, food and weather. We encourage you to send mail before a camper arrives or bring it on registration day. Since talking with parents directly via phone increases a camper's homesickness, we do not allow a phone call between you and your camper. If homesickness continues for an extended period of time, the Camp Director will notify you by phone.

#### **LAUNDRY AND BEDWETTING**

No laundry facilities are available to the campers. Emergencies such as bedwetting will be handled by the counselor in a discreet manner. If your camper has a bedwetting problem, please let us know and send extra sheets.

#### **FIRST AID**

Your child's well-being and safety is of the utmost importance to the staff at Holston Center.

We know that children often collect bruises and injuries as they play at home and at camp. We are prepared to administer simple first aid to any camper who receives a simple cut or bruise. If your child receives a serious injury, we will call EMS and contact the parent or guardian immediately.

Counselors will log information about injuries as they occur at camp. If your child suffers a minor injury at day camp, we will report the injury to you at the time of pickup. If an injured child wishes to communicate with a parent or guardian, we will gladly assist the child to make a telephone call.

Camp Staff is required to report any suspected acts of abuse at home to social services for investigation.

#### **VISITORS**

It is not possible for campers to have visitors during the camp session. Because of the short time your camper is here, most visitation has a negative effect and promotes homesickness. You are welcome to tour camp on registration day or attend Family Camp.

#### **SICK POLICY**

If a camper or staff member exhibits any symptom of COVID-19 (sore throat, dry cough, fever, body aches, etc), the person will be isolated and cared for away from the group. The guardian of the sick camper will be notified immediately.

If symptoms persist for 36 hours, the camper will be sent home.

#### **CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY (SEE COVID-19 POLICY)**

If your camper is unable to attend camp as planned, please notify us by calling 844-HOLSTON. We do not wish to be punitive to our camper families that must cancel their reservation. Refunds will be considered under the following circumstances:

- Parents may request a refund for the full balance minus the deposit fee if cancellation is made prior 30 days to check-in.
- Within 10 days of check-in, refunds for the full balance minus the deposit fee will only be allotted for cancellations in the event of exposure to or contraction of a contagious illness, including Covid-19.
- Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, the deposit fee of \$50 is non-refundable.
- If a camper is sent home due to misbehavior by the Director, there will be no refunds.



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#### **CHECK-IN PROCEDURES**

- Check-in begins at 3:00 PM at Holston's Dining Hall, located at the end of the camp road from the main entrance. Arrive by 4:00 PM. If you expect to arrive later, call the Program Director.
- Please note: some **GPS units provide incorrect directions to camp**. Ensure your GPS is routing you to Holston Camp in Banner Elk at WildCat Lake by using our physical address: 6993 Hickory Nut Gap Rd. Banner Elk, NC 28604
- *Please note that Hickory Nut Gap Rd is extremely curvy from Newland to Banner Elk. From Newland, we recommend taking NC-181 toward Linville, left onto NC-105 toward Boone and left on NC-184 to Banner Elk. In 3.8 miles, turn left onto Hickory Nut Gap Rd. Holston Camp is 1 mile on the right.*
- Be prepared to pay any outstanding balance on your account. Checks are accepted at check-in. Please no cash.
- Mail for your camper should be left at registration.
- Discuss with the Program Director any medications your child is currently taking, dietary needs, behavioral or emotional issues, and general physical health questions. Medications for your camper should be left with the Program Director. Please label all medication and provide clear instructions for administration.
- Confirm the approved pick up list with your camper's counselors.

#### **LUGGAGE**

Luggage will be tagged at check-in according to the cabin assignment and transported to its destination by camp staff. Campers will only be here for one week, and cabins will be shared with other campers, and all their luggage as well. For this reason, please limit luggage to one overnight bag and one backpack per camper.

#### **SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS/MEDICATIONS**

All medications or allergies must be noted on the Medical Release Waiver when you register your camper online. All medications that are brought to camp are stored and dispensed by the Camp Nurse. If prescription medications are sent to camp, it must be in the original pharmacy container listing camper's name, medication and dosage prescribed. If non-prescription medications are needed, the Program Director or Nurse will give these medications per the recommended dosage.

#### **CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES**

- Camp ends at 3:00 PM on Friday. Check-out will occur at the dining Hall. You will be notified by the Camp Director or Program Director if there is a location change.
- Weather permitting, we have a brief closing program for campers and parents at 3:00 on Friday. You may choose to sign-out your camper and leave immediately, or stay for the 15-20 minute program.
- Be sure to collect any medications or other items that are being held by the Program Director for your camper after signing-out.
- After you have checked out you may pick up your camper's luggage. Please pay careful attention to your camper's luggage and ensure that it is all collected (including laundry).



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### MAIN CAMP VS. RUSTIC CAMP: "WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?"

**Main Camp** has 5 heated, block cabins each sleeping 16 in bunks. Each cabin has 2 lavatories, 2 private toilets and 2 private tub/showers.

Main Camp cabins are located near the Dining Hall, main parking area, and Worship Point. Campers may be housed in Bell's Bungalow or Grigsby Dorm. *Bob's Hideaway or Rocky Knob may be used for older campers depending on the enrollment. These are primitive campsites.*

**Rustic Camp** has 5 primitive campsites. Each campsite has 2 open air, screened in cabins that sleep 8. (Some cabins have bunks while others have Eno hammocks.)

Each Rustic campsite has a cook shelter, picnic tables, sink with fresh water, wood fire grill, utensils, and campfire circle. Rustic Campers use the Rustic bathhouse. The bathhouse is clean and well lit. There are separate male and female bathrooms. Each bathroom has 3 lavatories, 3 toilets, and 3 shower stalls. The bathhouse has hot water.

### WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

*These are suggestions only. Your camper may not need all items. Please realize that the temperatures do drop to the 50s in June and July at night and rain is likely. Campers will get wet, dirty, and sweaty so a change of clothing for 6 days and 5 nights is strongly recommended. **Bold Items are strongly recommended.***

**BEDDING:** *Campers who will be located in Main Camp cabins may choose sheets or a sleeping bag. Campers who will be in our Rustic Cabins should bring a sleeping bag. Campers backpacking overnight should bring a "lightweight" sleeping bag. See "Additional Checklist for Adventure Camps" below.*

**Twin size sheets or sleeping bag**

**Blanket**

**Pillow**

**Lightweight sleeping bag**

*Note: Even if your camper is housed in one of our main camp cabins for the week, they will need a sleeping bag for overnight camp-outs.*

### SWIMMING:

**Modest swimsuit**

**Sunscreen**

**Towel for swimming**

### FOOTWEAR:

**1 pair for water activity - old tennis shoes are great. Tevas and Chacos are good choices. Shoes will get wet and muddy during creek explorations and waterfront activities.**

**1 pair closed-toe shoes for rock climbing, zip lines, and walking. Prefer lightweight hiking or athletic shoes with good support and traction.**



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1 pair shower shoes (optional)

*For campers doing longer trail hikes, a good pair of hiking shoes and socks are strongly recommended.*

**CLOTHING (don't send clothes that you don't want to get stained)**

Short and long pants

T-shirts (No halters, tube tops, cutoff tops or midriiffs. Please avoid provocative slogans of advertisements.)

Long sleeved shirt (Temperatures can drop into the 50s in June & July at our elevation of 4,000 feet)

Underwear

Socks **REQUIRED FOR HIKERS**

Light jacket, sweatshirt, sweater, hoodie (it gets cool at night)

Rain poncho or jacket **REQUIRED FOR AT HIKERS**

Sleepwear

**TOILETRIES (in a convenient container)**

Shampoo, brush, comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.

Soap in a soap box or baggie, (small bottled liquid body wash is handy)

Female sanitary protection

Stick deodorant (please no aerosol)

Towel(s) for bathing

Solution for contact lens if necessary

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS:**

Refillable water bottle

A lightweight backpack for carrying water bottle, repellent, sunblock, towel, etc.

Flashlight and extra batteries (a "headlight" is especially handy)

Non-aerosol insect repellent

Bible, notebook, pencils

**OPTIONAL:**

Disposable or digital camera (no cell phones)

Musical instrument (non-electric)



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- Stationery, stamps or self-addressed stamped postcards (for a letter home)
- Laundry bag (as if...)
- Journals, books, or other quiet time activities
- Crazy Garb for Dance Night

**WITH THE DELIBERATE INTENTION TO "UNPLUG" AT CAMP, WE REQUEST THAT CAMPERS DO NOT BRING CELL PHONES, GAMING DEVICES, TABLETS, NOOKS, KINDLES, MP3 PLAYERS, HAIR DRYERS, ETC. TO CAMP. WE HOPE CAMPERS UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF UNPLUGGING IS TO BE MORE CONSCIOUS AND AWARE OF THEIR CAMP COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT, AS WELL AS THEM BEING AVAILABLE TO HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD.**

**OVERNIGHT BACKPACKING:**

**Camp provides:** Backpacks, safety equipment, cook stoves, water purification needs, meals.

**You provide:** Lightweight sleeping bag, sleeping mat, hiking shoes (must be broken in before camp); hiking socks (2 pair), suitable hiking apparel (quick dry fabric is best), head cover, flashlight/headlight with new batteries, 32 oz. water bottle, hooded poncho or rain suit.

**OVERNIGHT CANOE:**

**Camp provides:** Canoes, personal flotation device (PFD), safety equipment, cook stoves, water purification needs, meals.

**You provide:** Lightweight sleeping bag, sleeping mat, sun screen, water shoes such as Tevas, Chacos, or old tennis shoes (no flip flops!), quick dry apparel, head cover, flashlight/headlight with new batteries, 32 oz. water bottle, hooded poncho or rain suit.

*If you need assistance procuring any of the above items, please contact the camp at 844-465-7866. We will do our best to lend you what you need for a comfortable and safe week at camp.*