



# Parent Handbook

Welcome to Hosmer Point! We hope that this guide will answer many of the questions you have about sending your child to camp. You can find more information on our website, HosmerPoint.com, in the “Parent Portal” section; including: driving directions and a list of nearby accommodations, and a packing list. You may also wish to read the [FAQ section](#) under “Camps” and “Learn More” on our website. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to get in touch! We’re here for you.

**E-mail: [info@hosmerpoint.com](mailto:info@hosmerpoint.com) - Phone: 802-586-2090**

## Packing For Camp

### **Clothing and Luggage:**

Please read the [packing checklist](#) (available in the Parent Portal section of our website) for complete details of what to bring. There is no camp uniform, and no need to “dress to impress” while at camp. Campers will get dirty, and clothes that come to camp may not come back the same. Don’t pack your favorite outfits! Multiple pairs of socks and changes of shoes and outer layers are important in case we have a rainy week. Good shoes for hiking (such as hiking boots or sturdy sneakers) are essential, as are sneakers for running around and sandals or water shoes that can get wet. Labeled clothing will help ensure that your child’s clothes come home with them on closing day! Space in the cabins is limited – you should plan on keeping most of your belongings under your bunk. Trunks or top-opening duffels work well, as they keep possessions easy to find.

### **Laundry and Labeling:**

In an effort to conserve resources and act on our mission to promote sustainable practices, we ask that campers bring enough clothing with them to last two weeks. Should it be necessary, counselors will wash a small load of laundry for the cabin so that campers have the essentials – however, we encourage campers to practice conservation and wear clothing for multiple days if possible. We will provide laundry service for campers staying for more than one session. Laundry will be collected during the session break. Campers staying for more than one session should bring two laundry bags so while one is away being washed, the other is accumulating the next pile of dirty clothes. It is essential that everything, including socks and underwear, be labeled.

**Electronics:**

Hosmer Point is an “unplugged” camp. That means that campers are absolutely prohibited from using electronics, including cell phones, ipads, ipods, laptops, and e-readers (even e-readers can connect to the internet. But don't worry, Hosmer Point has a large lending library of young adult fiction!) Campers will be asked to turn over any electronics for storage in the camp office until departure. Digital cameras are allowed, however campers should be aware that they may not be able to re-charge their batteries. Camp can be a harsh environment for cameras, and Hosmer Point is not responsible for the safety of these items. Inexpensive cameras or disposable cameras are a good solution.

**Candy, Snacks and Other Food:**

Food is prohibited in the cabins, as it attracts wildlife. Food brought to camp will be confiscated and stored in an animal-proof area until departure. Healthy snacks are available in the dining hall at all times, so there is no need to worry about your child going hungry.

**Sports Equipment:**

If your child plans to play soccer, please pack shin guards and even cleats. Although we have lots of sports equipment at camp, some campers may wish to bring their own. Please inquire if you're wondering what will be available at camp. Good quality mountain bikes and helmets will be provided, however participants may wish to use their own bikes instead. Little Bellas campers generally bring their own bikes. Camp cannot take responsibility for lost or stolen equipment.

**Pocket Knives:**

Pocket knives that fold and have a blade length of four inches or less are permitted on camp. Please let the staff know when you check in if your child has brought a pocket knife so that we can administer a skills assessment or enroll them in a short knife safety class.

**Bedding:**

Camp beds accommodate cot or single bed sized linens. Temperatures can reach 40 degrees at night, so be certain to pack warm bedding. Campers will be most comfortable with sheets and a sleeping bag. Many campers also like to have an “egg crate” or other foam mattress pad. In addition, campers should bring a pillow, pillowcase, and multiple towels for both showering and swimming.

**Money and Personal Property:**

Campers will not need money while at camp. They will be able to make purchases at the Hosmer Point General Store by adding items to their tab (set up in the Parent Portal). Any expenses incurred during field trips (such as a stop for ice cream) will also be added to their tabs. Please leave expensive or hard to replace items at home. This includes jewelry, and any electronic equipment. Don't forget to label everything. We do not assume responsibility for the loss or damage of campers' personal property. We will ask that campers turn over passports, tickets, and other valuables for storage in the camp office.

Campers may not bring vehicles, animals, or weapons of any kind with them to camp.

# Opening and Closing Days

## **Opening Day:**

Arrival time on opening day is between 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM. Counselors will show you where to park, and where to drop off your luggage. Be sure to keep any medicines out of your bag so you can take them to the camp nurse at check-in. If it's your first time at camp, you'll receive a special invitation to meet your cabin counselors before check-in. During check-in, we'll make sure we have all your camp forms, you'll meet the camp nurse and turn over any medications you brought, campers will be checked for head lice, and you can set up an account at the camp store (if you haven't already). After you've checked in, you can walk with your child to their cabin. Counselors will have dropped off your luggage in your cabin section. A counselor will be in the cabin area if you need help. Once everyone is checked in, there will be a short welcome ceremony at the Community Tree where our counselors and staff will introduce themselves and answer any final questions. We ask that parents leave following the presentation so campers can begin to acclimate to life at camp.

## **Closing Day:**

Campers can be picked up on closing day between 10:00 AM and 11:00 AM. The campers will be waiting to meet their parents at the Theater, and you can pick up their bags in the parking area where you dropped them off. Before departing you'll need to check out. There your child will receive a special tag with their name on it to nail to the Community Tree. If you'd like, your child can also take you for a camp tour. If someone other than the camper's parents will be picking the camper up, please let us know in advance. After camp, we'll send out an email with all the addresses of all the campers who were there that session. This day can be very emotional for our campers as they've developed close connections with camp and their friends and counselors. They will most likely be exhausted after the rigorous schedule and looking forward to seeing you. For this reason, we don't schedule activities for closing day.

Well behaved dogs are welcome at camp on opening and closing days. Dogs must be leashed at all times and owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets.

## **Gratuities:**

We ask that you not single out counselors for gratuities as all staff members work as a team to make camp a great place to be. If you would like to monetarily thank the counselors, we do take donations towards the end-of-season staff party. Thank-you letters are also much appreciated.

# Staying in Touch

## **Viewing Camp Pictures Online:**

We post pictures of our activities at camp on Parent Portal section of our website nearly every day. To access the gallery, you will need to log-in, then choose “photo gallery” under the “additional options” tab. You can give friends and family access to the photo gallery as well – from the opening page, click the grey “friend accounts” bar in the menu on the right.

We post around a dozen pictures each day to give a “taste” of what was happening at camp. Although we can’t post pictures of every camper every day, you can always call our office to check on your child if you’re feeling concerned. We also regularly post pictures of camp life on Facebook, so if you haven’t already, “like” our Facebook page!

## **Letters and E-mail:**

Everyone loves getting letters from home, and almost every camper will receive at least one letter while they’re at camp. Please address letters to your child c/o Hosmer Point, 76 Hosmer Point Lane, Craftsbury Common, VT 05827, U.S.A. We will schedule time for campers to write letters home, and our counselors will write to parents as well – so expect to get some mail from camp! Letters often take an extra day to reach Craftsbury Common, compared to most other locations in Vermont. Keep this in mind when sending mail to be sure your camper will receive your letters before they leave. Generally, letters mailed less than four days from the end of camp will arrive too late. Letters received after the end of the session will be returned to the sender. Due to USPS regulations, postcards cannot be returned. Because we believe in being “unplugged” while at camp, campers will not have access to computers and will not be able to send or receive e- mails.

## **Care Packages:**

Due to the proximity of wildlife to our cabins and to promote healthy eating habits, we do not allow campers to receive care packages containing food. If you feel a need to send a care package (to celebrate a birthday, etc.), items like magazines, novels, stationary, and card games are good gifts. The majority of campers do not receive care packages while at camp. Packages can be sent to Hosmer Point, 76 Hosmer Point Lane, Craftsbury Common, VT 05827. Campers will be asked to open packages in the camp office, and any food items will be stored in the office until departure. Packages generally arrive late in the day, after mail call. Because of this, packages may reach your child a day later than you would expect.

## **Calls Home:**

Due to the short duration of our camps, campers will not be scheduled to make a regular call home (we’ve found this disrupts the camp experience and can cause homesickness). You may call us and ask to speak with one of our Directors about your child at any time and as often as needed. Our office number is 802-586-2090.

# Health and Safety

## **Medical Forms:**

We require that all parents complete a Health Form before their child may attend camp. This form may be completed online, and can be found at the Parent Portal on [hosmerpoint.com](http://hosmerpoint.com). Once you have logged into your Parent Portal account, scroll down to the “Incomplete Forms” bar in the menu on the right.

When filling out the Health Form, please remember that we need to make informed decisions about all of the campers who are a part of the Hosmer Point community. Our purpose in having pertinent health information, both physical and emotional, is to be able to better serve your child. Please provide us with all the necessary information we need to care for your camper in the best way possible.

Medical attention in our camp health center is covered by your tuition. All additional medical costs incurred during camp are the responsibility of the camper’s parents. These include any prescribed medications, doctor’s or hospital visits, and/or any other outside medical/dental/mental visits. Parents are financially responsible for any and all charges related to medical treatment which are not covered by their medical insurance.

## **Illness and Accident Policy:**

While we will do everything possible to have a healthy, accident-free summer, it is still important to have a policy for handling illnesses and accidents at camp. Should it be necessary, our nurse will evaluate a camper and determine whether a visit to the doctor or hospital is needed. If such a visit is needed, the camper’s parent or emergency contact will be notified as soon as possible. Should a camper be required to spend the night in the camp health center, we will be in touch. We do not generally call parents for routine health issues such as blisters, headaches, sore muscles, minor sunburns, etc.

## **Medications and Prescription Drugs:**

For the safety of our campers, our camp rules require that all medications, from prescription drugs to over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal remedies, be kept in a locked facility at our health center. These are given to campers as needed and only by our nurse or other designated staff member. All medications should be brought to the nurse on opening day. Medicines are then dispensed per physician’s orders or label directions. Prescriptions must be in their original container with camper’s name and dosage information. If sending prescriptions to camp, be sure we have enough for the camper’s entire camp stay.

## **Communicable Diseases:**

If your child has been exposed to any communicable diseases within three weeks of opening day, please notify the camp. If your child has a fever, please keep them at home until they are fever free for 24 hours (with no medications).

**Lice:**

Take a moment prior to camp to check your child's head for lice, especially if they are coming from another summer camp. To keep our camp lice-free, we screen each camper for head lice as part of our check-in process. If your child is found to have lice, the camp nurse will assist in making a treatment plan. You may be required to drive to a pharmacy and purchase lice shampoo, a new pillow case, etc. We reserve the right to send campers home if they cannot be adequately treated at camp.

**Ticks:**

Although ticks are much less common in this part of Vermont than in the rest of New England, the range of ticks continues to expand, and we like to be prepared! Ticks are the primary transmitters of Lyme Disease, and several other diseases. To prevent tick bites, we recommend that campers bring light-weight long pants and an EPA registered tick repellent (such as 30% Deet or 30% lemon eucalyptus oil) to spray on shoes, clothing, and exposed skin during activities in the woods. We will also have insect repellants available for campers to use. Permethrin treated clothing is also effective at stopping ticks, and is available commercially -- or you can treat your child's clothing yourself. Permethrin treated clothing remains effective through several washings. As an additional precaution, cabin counselors will lead campers in a mandatory tick-check each night before bedtime. Any ticks which are discovered will be removed by the camp nurse, and campers will be monitored for any signs of illness. Parents will be notified if their child was known to be bitten by a tick.

After a tick bite, the microbe that causes Lyme Disease stays in a human (incubates) for 3 to 32 days before any early symptoms appear. The early symptoms of Lyme Disease include one or more of the following: circular target-shaped rash, fever, headache, muscle ache, and fatigue. We advise parents to be on the lookout for these symptoms after camp, and to seek immediate medical attention should they occur. The tick normally must be imbedded in the skin for at least 24 hours to release the responsible microbe.

These policies are precautions and should not be cause for alarm, however, we urge all parents to talk with their children about preventing tick bites and tick-borne illnesses. You can find more information on prevention from the [American Camp Association here](#), and from [the Vermont Department of Health here](#).

## Transportation

**Personal Car:**

If you are driving to camp, refer to the directions and lodging page under the Parent Portal tab on our website. We recommend using our directions when navigating from the highway to camp, as cell service can be spotty and there are many seasonal roads in the area.

**Commercial Airline:**

Commercial airlines have direct service to Burlington, VT (BTV) from various airports.

**Airport Pick-Up and Drop-Off Service:**

We can meet campers at Burlington International Airport on opening day and return them on closing day. We request that you schedule flights to camp to arrive before or as close as possible to noon. This will allow us the time to get back to camp for a good afternoon of getting to know you activities prior to dinner and our first evening activity. If you're child's flight does not arrive in Burlington by 1pm, please send snacks and a bag lunch with them. Departures from Burlington on closing day should be booked between 10am and 2pm. We realize that international flights may have to be slightly later, but please make sure that your child's flight is not the last flight of the day out of Burlington. This will provide at least one later flight in case of flight cancellations. You can [schedule a pick-up or drop-off](#) by clicking "make a reservation" and choosing Airport Pick-Up/Drop-Off in your Parent Portal account, or from the Parent Portal menu on [hosmerpoint.com](http://hosmerpoint.com).

Airlines vary in their requirements for children flying alone. You may need to arrange for your child to fly "Unaccompanied Minor" (UM) status. This should be done when you are making the flight reservations. You will need to complete additional paperwork, and the airline will need to know who is meeting the camper at the airport. Please contact us for this information. Be sure to fill out the pick-up and drop-off registration form completely and accurately, and to pass on any changes of itineraries or flight numbers/times to the camp office. It never hurts to check in the day before your child's flight and make sure that we have the most up-to-date information on your child's travel plans.

**Transportation Charges:**

If your child is being picked up or dropped off at the Burlington Airport, we will charge a \$50 fee (one way) for this service.

## Homesickness and Visits

**How to Deal with Homesickness:**

Campers often say their weeks at Hosmer Point are the best of the summer. Camp is a wonderful place to exercise independence, learn, and grow. Nevertheless, we have all experienced homesickness at some point in our lives. It is a necessary part of growing up, can be mild or severe, and sometimes is harder on the parent than on the child. Many children will experience homesickness during their stay at camp, but with a coordinated effort by family members and the camp staff, we are confident that it can be overcome. We don't treat homesickness lightly and are willing to spend as much time as is necessary to ensure a positive camping experience for your child. Our counselors and directors have the tools and experience to know how to help children through their difficult periods, and turn conquering homesickness into an empowering experience. Most campers will be fine in the first couple of hours or days.

In order to better promote a smooth transition, we have a busy schedule of activities, create lots of ways for children to get to know each other, and have counselors available and engaged with each individual child. Someone from the leadership team will certainly be in touch if a child's homesickness is getting in the way of their ability to have fun at camp. Almost always, the homesickness will fade and children will feel "camp sickness" when it is time to leave camp at the end of the session.

Here are some guidelines to help you and your child prepare for the ups and downs of their stay at camp:

- Don't feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is the first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth and development.
- Do not berate children or make them feel like a failure for being homesick. When your child completes a visit away from home successfully, celebrate their accomplishment.
- Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves. Consider role-playing situations, like asking a counselor for help or introducing yourself to someone for the first time.
- Speak openly of possible homesickness. Feeling homesick and missing family, friends, and pets is normal. Knowing this, your child may accept feeling homesick with less anxiety.
- Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal or favorite blanket.
- Heighten your child's interest by pointing out some of the exciting activities at camp, perhaps by viewing the photographs and reading more about camp on the web site. At the same time, be sure your child's expectations are realistic. He or she will be challenged and have to work hard at times, such as when learning a new activity.
- Read the FAQ section of the website with your child so they have a better idea what to expect when they get to camp. The FAQ section was written specifically for first-time campers!
- When dropping your child off at camp, take enough time to look around and meet the counselors and then leave. This is not a good time to visit further. A cheerful, confident attitude on your part will get camp off to a good start.

Our experience has been that campers come to feel that Hosmer Point is a second home. We offer support, encouragement and love to all of our campers. We offer an opportunity for them to make lifelong friends with peers and counselors while they are participating in activities they enjoy. It is our hope that you will find your child returning with more self-confidence, more of a sense of responsibility, and very happy (sad first, at having to leave their new friends). They will also have missed you and will love being with you again.

### **Visiting Camp:**

We do not have a visiting day during our camps, as we find visits from parents often exacerbate homesickness and take away from the camp experience. We encourage you to spend a good deal of time with us during your visit on opening day.



**Roommate Requests:**

Camp is a place to grow and make new friends. We also understand that it may make coming to camp a bit easier if your child comes with a friend. If that is the case, please let us know and we will take that into consideration when making cabin assignments. You can request cabin mates on the “letter to the counselors” form. We arrange cabin groupings based on age, grade, and gender. Please understand that we make cabin assignments well in advance, so if you turn in your letter to the counselors late, we may not be able to accommodate your request.

## Hosmer Point General Store

The General Store will be open a few times per week. For sale are Hosmer Point clothing, postcards, souvenirs, and items your child might need (such as water bottles, soap, disposable cameras, and stamps). The general store does not accept cash except on opening and closing days. Purchases at the store will be deducted from your child’s account. You can monitor your child’s spending and add money to their account in the parent portal section of our website at anytime (after logging in, select “camp store” under the “additional options” tab). Store spending varies greatly, but most parents put \$25 - \$100 in their child’s account. Campers staying for more than one session may need a somewhat larger allowance since they’re staying longer, and may have some expenses for field trips during the session break. As a guide, \$25 will be enough to buy a Hosmer Point sweatshirt, a popular souvenir. Unused General Store funds may be applied to the next summer or donated to our scholarship fund. Please note that we cannot refund money from store accounts.

## Camp Policies

**Search and Seizure Policy:**

Leadership staff may search camper’s belongings if there is a good reason to believe the camper is in possession of contraband, illegal, or stolen goods. Unless there is an immediate safety concern, camp staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians before any search is conducted. Any items on camp property, including locked luggage, may be searched. Recovered electronics and other contraband will be kept in the camp office until closing day. Illegal items will be disposed of appropriately. Staff will never touch a camper in an attempt to perform a search of their clothes or body. If a gun is found on camp the appropriate authorities will be contacted immediately.

**Tuition Payments:**

Tuition balances are due by May 1 for camps beginning in June, June 1 for camps beginning in July, and July 1 for camps beginning in August, unless a payment plan is set up in advance. If the due date has passed at the time of enrollment, tuition in full is due with registration. Payment plans must be completed by the first day of camp. We ask for this commitment in order to guarantee your child's place. If we do not receive payment, or hear from you to let us know when to expect payment, we will assume that your plans have changed. We will cancel your camp reservation and register the first child on the waiting list.

**Cancellation and Refund Policy:**

A non-refundable processing fee or \$100 will be retained if you cancel your child's reservation prior to May 1 for camps beginning in June, June 1 for camps beginning in July, and July 1 for camps beginning in August. After the dates above, the full deposit will be retained, and the balance of tuition may be refunded (depending on the situation). No refund will be given for families who do not notify us of their cancellation plans in advance of camp. We reserve the right to withdraw, without refund, any camper whose influence or actions are deemed harmful, or who will not live within the rules and policies of our camp.