Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cortland County

4-H Camp Owahta 2027 Parent Handbook










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Welcome to 4-H Camp Owahta!

Located at 4826 Knecht Road McGraw, NY 13101

Mission

At 4-H Camp Owahta, we empower young people to tap into their potential, grow, belong, and thrive through outdoor adventure, hands-on learning, and meaningful connections within an inclusive camp community.

Vision

4-H Camp Owahta envisions a future where every young person has a place to belong, grow, and thrive. Through meaningful connections, outdoor experiences, and shared traditions, we inspire campers to tap into their full potential and become caring, confident individuals, engaged community members, and responsible stewards of their communities and the natural world.

Values

- **Belonging:** We welcome and celebrate campers, families, staff, and volunteers of all backgrounds, identities, and experiences. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive environment where every individual feels respected, supported, and valued.
- **Learning & Growth:** We believe young people learn best by doing. Through hands-on experiences, campers develop confidence, independence, curiosity, and discover new strengths and interests.
- **Positive Relationships:** We value the friendships, mentorships, and connections that help campers build trust, strengthen community, and create lasting memories.
- **Character & Leadership:** We value experiences that help campers develop leadership, resilience, responsibility, teamwork, empathy, and integrity. These character traits empower youth to tap into their potential, face challenges with confidence, lead with purpose, build strong relationships, and make positive contributions throughout their lives, communities, and beyond
- **Lifelong Skills:** We value opportunities that help campers build communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, and outdoor living skills that support success in school, work, and life.
- **Community:** We believe camp is stronger when everyone contributes. We foster a supportive environment where campers and staff work together, celebrate one another's successes, and create a sense of belonging for all.
- **Stewardship & Adventure:** We value exploring the natural world, embracing new challenges, and developing an appreciation and responsibility for caring for our environment and communities.
- **Camper Voice:** We value camper ideas, perspectives, and feedback, recognizing that campers help shape the traditions, experiences, and future of Camp Owahta.

Why Overnight Camp Matters:

Overnight camp provides young people with the opportunity to step away from their daily routines and into a supportive community where they can grow, explore, and discover who they are. Surrounded by new people, new experiences, and new challenges, campers develop independence, responsibility, resilience, and confidence while learning to navigate life away from their usual support systems.

At camp, young people are encouraged to take healthy risks in a safe and supportive environment. Whether trying the climbing tower, performing in front of a group, sleeping away from home for the first time, or making a new friend, campers learn to step outside their comfort zones, discover their strengths, and realize they are capable of more than they may have thought possible. These experiences help campers understand their limits while also challenging them to reach their full potential.

Camp also allows youth to discover new passions and interests through hands-on experiences, outdoor adventures, and opportunities they may not encounter elsewhere. Living alongside peers helps campers learn responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and how to contribute to a shared community.

Perhaps most importantly, overnight camp provides something increasingly rare: the chance to disconnect from screens and reconnect with the world around them. For many campers, a week at camp may be the longest period of time they spend without regularly checking a phone, tablet, or other device. Instead, they spend their days building friendships, exploring nature, solving problems, being active, and creating memories that cannot be experienced through a screen.

The Benefits of Overnight Camp:

- Builds independence and self-confidence
- Develops responsibility and accountability
- Strengthens resilience and problem-solving skills
- Encourages healthy risk-taking in a safe environment
- Helps campers discover new passions and interests
- Provides opportunities to try new things and overcome challenges
- Creates meaningful friendships and social connections
- Develops leadership, teamwork, and communication skills
- Teaches campers how to live and contribute within a shared community
- Fosters a sense of belonging and personal growth
- Connects youth with nature and the outdoors
- Provides a healthy break from screens and technology
- Encourages campers to reach their full potential

Open House Events

We will be holding **three** Open Houses **at 4-H Camp Owahta** in the Spring of 2027.
4-H Camp Owahta is located at 4826 Knecht Road McGraw, NY 13101.
Registration is not required.

Saturday, April 24, 10am-1pm. Come tour the camp, meet the Camp Director, have your questions answered, and end the day with a campfire- made snack! (hot dogs/veggie dogs)

Friday, May 14, 5pm-7:30pm Come tour the camp, meet the Camp Director, have your questions answered, and end the day with a delicious and gooey smore!

Saturday, May 22, 10am-1pm Come tour the camp, meet the Camp Director, have your questions answered, and end the day with a campfire- made snack!

Tentative: In addition to our three Open Houses our Camp Director, Rachel Bortin will be at **Cortland's Pudgie's Pizzeria on Thursday, February 11 from 5:30pm-7pm.** Meet the Camp Director, get your camp questions answered, learn about our exciting summer programs and register for camp. Plus, enjoy a free slice of pizza on us! **One slice per person**

New for 2027!

- **NEW! Overnight Camp Discovery (Ages 7-10):** A 3-day, 2-night introductory overnight camp experience for youth ready to discover the magic of overnight camp for the first time!

- The **Counselor-In-Training (CIT) program** age has shifted to 16 years old. CITs will be required to submit an application (located within the Document Center) in order to be considered for the program. **A submitted application does not guarantee registration.** *All CITs who successfully complete the program have the opportunity to work Day Camp; Monday-Friday, August 9-13, 2027!*

- **Exploring a New Opportunity: Air Rifle (Ages 9+):** We are excited to be exploring the addition of a 4-H Air Rifle Shooting Sports program for campers ages 9 and older. As a complement to our archery program, Air Rifle would provide another opportunity for campers to challenge themselves, build confidence, and tap into their potential through the development of focus, responsibility, and new skills. For campers that are really invested, check out our year-round 4-H Air Rifle club!

- Our 33rd Annual 4-H Camp Owahta Olympics will be taking place on Week 5 this summer instead of week 6, our last week of camp. This adjustment will help us provide the highest-quality experience possible while allowing more campers to take part in one of Owahta's most exciting traditions.

- The Camp Store is BACK! Families must add money to their camper's Account prior to their camp session. No money, credit/debit cards or checks will be accepted.

- Scholarship Applications are BACK! Applications are located within the Document Center. **Scholarship awards depend on available funding, and submitting an application does not guarantee approval.**



Summer Camp 2027 Offerings (descriptions found **here**)

Week	Program	Dates
Week 1	Overnight Camp Discovery (Wed-Fri)	July 5-7, 2027
Week 2	Overnight Camp	July 11-16, 2027
Week 2	Day Camp	July 12-16, 2027
Week 3	Overnight Camp	July 18-23, 2027
Week 3	Counselor-In-Training (CIT)	July 18-23, 2027
Week 3	Day Camp	July 19-23, 2027
Week 4	Overnight Camp	July 25-30, 2027
Week 4	Leaders-In-Training (LIT)	July 25-30, 2027
Week 4	Day Camp	July 26-30, 2027
Week 5-Olympic Week!	Overnight Camp	August 1-6, 2027
Week 5-Olympic Week!	Day Camp	August 2-6, 2027
Week 6	Day Camp	August 9-13, 2027

****Registration for *returning campers begins on December 1, 2026*. Registration opens for all campers on January 1, 2027 and closes August 6, 2027.****

Camp Registration & Required Forms

All of Summer Camp 2027 registration and paperwork will be completed through UltraCamp. Using your UltraCamp Account, you can register, make payments, submit required forms, and upload documents (including immunization records). Paper forms are available upon request by email at owahta@cornell.edu or may be picked up at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Office (997 McLean Road, Cortland, NY 13045). All required forms must be received by the deadlines below. **If required forms are not submitted by their due dates, your child may lose their spot at camp and may not be able to attend.**

Please note: the Medication Authorization Form must be signed by a doctor.

****Immunization records must be uploaded to your UltraCamp Account or be delivered to the office in person, please DO NOT fax immunization records.****

Required Forms & Uploads Due Dates:

• Acknowledgment of Risk — Due *Two Weeks* Before Your *First* Camp Session
• Photo Release Form — Due *Two Weeks* Before Your *First* Camp Session
• Summer Camp T-Shirt Form (Olympic Week only) — Due July 5, 2027
• Camper Health History — Due June 21, 2027
• Upload of Camper's Immunization Records — Due June 21, 2027 **(upload to UltraCamp or bring to the office; DO NOT fax)**
• Upload of Camper's Health Insurance Card (if applicable) — Due June 21, 2027
• Medication Authorization Form — Due June 21, 2027 **(must be signed by a doctor)**
• 4-H Camp Code of Conduct — Due *One Week* Before Your *First* Camp Session

How to Access the Required Forms & Uploads:

The following required forms are included within the camper registration process;

- Acknowledgment of Risk
- Photo Release Form
- Summer Camp T-Shirt Form (Olympic Week only)
- Camper Health History
- 4-H Camp Code of Conduct

The following forms can be accessed through the **Document Center**;

- Medication Authorization Form (Overnight OR Day)

The following items will be assigned to your Account **after** your child is registered;

- Camper's Health Insurance Card (is applicable)
- Camper's Immunization Records (DO NOT fax it)

To complete these items click the assigned item and upload accordingly.

Camp Tuition, Discounts & Scholarships

2027 Program Pricing			
Counselor-In-Training (CIT) ***$425/ week*** **Age 16** Sunday- Friday One Week Only	Leader-In-Training (LIT) ***$450/ week*** **Ages 14-15** Sunday - Friday One Week Only	Overnight Camp ***$450/ week*** **Ages 8-15** Monday- Friday	Day Camp ***$325/ week*** **Ages 5-12** Monday- Friday

- **Before Care (7am-9am, includes breakfast):** for an additional fee of $30/ week per child
- **After Care (4pm-5:30):** for an additional fee of $15/week per child
- **Summer T-Shirt (Olympic Week only):** $20 added to the cost of camp tuition
- **Camp Transportation (Day Camp only):** for an additional fee of $25/week per child
- **Thursday Overnight (Day Camp only):** $50/per child

Discounts (applied automatically):

- **Early Bird Discount:** Register by March 1, 2027 and save $25 per week of camp, for up to two weeks!
- **Sibling Discount:** Register siblings for the same week of camp and receive $25 off per child!

Scholarship Applications are located within the Document Center. We will do our best to provide as much scholarship funding as possible to as many families as possible based on our available funding. Scholarship applications are *reviewed in the order they are received.*

Submitting an application, does not guarantee your family will receive scholarship funding.



Getting Ready For Summer

This handbook is here to help you and your camper feel ready and excited for the summer ahead—from what to expect at camp to how to set your camper up for success.

PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY AND TALK THROUGH IT WITH YOUR CAMPER

(Seriously—this is one of the best ways to help camp feel comfortable and exciting on day one!)

Prepare Your Child For Camp:

1. Have your child talk to other families, friends, relatives, etc. who have gone to the camp, share positive experiences
2. Have your child spend a weekend with a friend or relative (that they do not normally stay with).
3. Go over the daily schedule with your child. Attend an Open House and learn as much as you can about camp life.
4. Teach your child how to care for themselves. Talk about dressing for the weather, keeping their things picked up, making their bed, etc. Have your child practice and get comfortable with doing a tick check (more information located in the "Health Care" section).
5. Have your child practice going to bed without any type of screen, speaker, or electronic device.
6. Problem-solve with your child by using "what if" situations like, "What if you don't get along with another camper?" or "What if you don't feel well?" Let your child brainstorm solutions and make sure they know who they should go to with any issues they may have.
7. Familiarize your child with the outdoors. Children are unfamiliar with total darkness and country night sounds. Practice walking with a flashlight (not a cell phone).
8. Missing home is fairly common. Encourage your child to speak openly about it. Our camp staff are trained to help your child through these expected ups & downs.
9. Letters & postcards are the best way to communicate with your child while they are away at camp. Pack a stamped and addressed envelope/postcard so that they can write home if they chose. You can also send them a letter!
10. Communicate and inform the camp staff of your child's needs **prior to the first day of camp!** Information can be put on their Camper Health History Form or emailed to owahta@cornell.edu. In order to set up your child for success our summer camp team needs more information than less. We are not here to judge, we are here to support and provide an outstanding experience for all campers. **Please know-due to our structure, camp space and staff we may not be able to accommodate all camper's need's.**
11. Prepare yourself (and the rest of your family) for your child going off to camp. You have chosen the best camp for your child, and they will have a wonderful summer filled with friendships, exciting activities, personal growth, and lasting memories.

4-H Camp Owahta Policies

OFFICE HOURS: There is a staff member in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Cortland office from 8:00 AM to 4:30PM, Monday-Friday. The phone number is 607-391-2660. After 4:30 PM leave a message and we will get back to you within two days. This number is for general camp information, registration help and guidance. If this is an emergency and you need to contact your camper, please call the camp phone.

PHONE CALL POLICY: The camp phones are used for **emergency purposes only**. Campers are not permitted to receive or make phone calls. Please refrain from calling camp to check on your child. If there is a problem or unusual situation involving a camper, the Camp Director(s) or Camp Nurse will contact the parent(s). If you do not hear from us, you can assume your child is having a good time at camp! *The phone number for camp will be posted and shared on Sunday for Overnight and on Monday for Day Camp.*

VISITATION POLICY: For the health and safety of our campers and staff, only screened staff and volunteers, and registered campers are allowed at camp when camp is in session. Unannounced visitors will be asked to leave camp unless in extenuating circumstances. You, as a parent, might be tempted to visit your child during their camp session. We do not encourage parents to visit campers during sessions, as it is disruptive to the camper's busy camp day and can ignite homesickness (missing home) in your camper as well as others. We encourage you to send a letter or postcard to your camper instead! In special circumstances, such as an emergency situation or severe illness, parents can communicate with our Camp Director(s) to make special arrangements.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering at camp this summer, please email owhata@cornell.edu **prior to June 1,2027**

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AT CAMP: Continuing attendance at camp is contingent on proper enrollment, full payment and appropriate camper conduct as per the NYS 4-H Camp Code of Conduct, LIT Expectations and/or CIT Expectations.

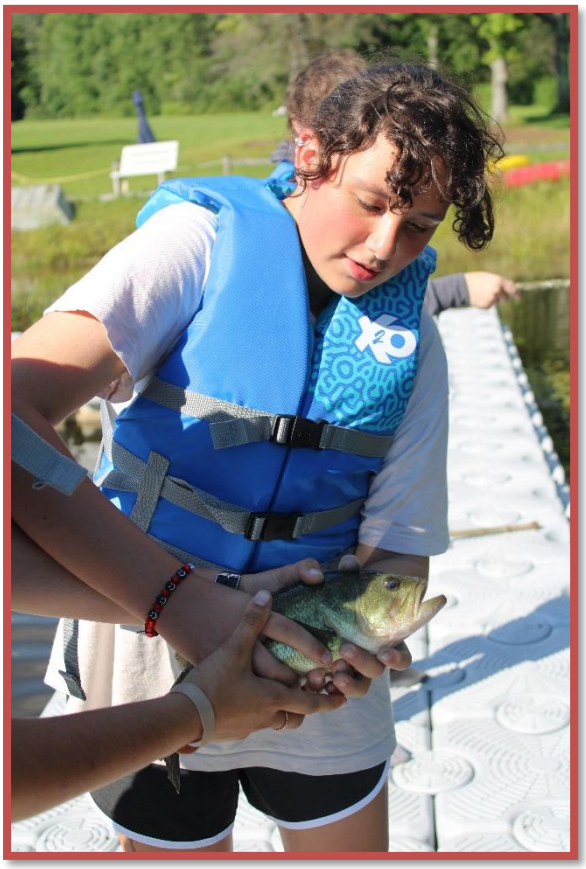
We do our best to accommodate all of your camper's needs. Due to our program structure, camp environment, and available staffing, we may not be able to accommodate every request. We encourage families to communicate their camper's needs with us as early as possible, so we can work together to determine whether Camp Owahta can provide the resources and support needed for a safe, successful, and rewarding experience.

CAMPER SESSIONS: Camper Sessions are scheduled in one-week long increments.

Overnight Campers are dropped off starting Sunday afternoon between 2-3PM and are picked up at the end of sessions on Fridays between 4-5PM.

Day Campers are transported to the camp via 4-H Camp Owahta transportation or parent/guardian's personal car. Day camp runs Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. *Early Care and After Care are available for an additional fee.*





Cornell Cooperative Extension
Cortland County

4-H Camp Owahta Program and Cancellation Policies

Family Cancellations

All cancellations, transfers and credits must go through the 4-H Camp Owahta team. Families who wish to cancel their camp session must email owahta@cornell.edu with the subject line "Camper First and Last Name, Camp Session- Cancellation/Credit/Transfer". **All emails will be reviewed based on the date received (date of the email).**

Refunds (when applicable) are issued within **14 business days**.

* Before and After Care fees are not included within the camp fees policies stated for day and overnight camps. Please refer to the separate Before and After care cancellation policy.*

Day and Overnight Camp:

- **On or before April 5, 2027;**
  - **Refund:** 100% of payments **minus** the $100 non-refundable deposit
  - **OR Credit Transfer:** 100% of payments **minus** the $100 non-refundable deposit towards an *existing* 2027 camp registration
  - **OR Credit: 100% credit** of payments made (including non-refundable deposit) towards a new 2027 camp registration

- **Between April 6 – May 3, 2027;**
  - **Refund:** 50% of payments **minus** the $100 non-refundable deposit
  - **OR Credit Transfer:** 75% of payments **minus** the $100 non-refundable deposit towards an *existing* 2027 camp registration
  - **OR Credit: 75% credit** of total payments made (including non-refundable deposit) towards a new 2027 camp registration

- **Between May 4 – June 4, 2027;**
  - **Refund:** 25% of payments **minus** the $100 non-refundable deposit
  - **OR Credit: 50% credit** of total payments made (including non-refundable deposit) towards a new 2027 camp registration
  - **No Credit transfers offered**

- **Between June 5- June 18, 2027;**
  - **No cash refunds**
  - **Credit only:** up to **25% credit** of total payments made (including non-refundable deposit) towards a new 2027 camp registration **if your original spot is filled from the waitlist**. If your original spot is not filled from the waitlist, no credit will be issued.
  - **No Credit transfers offered**

- **On or after June 19, 2027;**
  - **No cash refunds OR credits available**
  - **No Credit transfers offered**

Early Care and After Care Cancellation Policies

Prior to May 4, 2027 families may remove Early Care and/or After Care and receive:

- **A 100% refund of payments made towards** Early Care and/or After Care
- **OR a 100% Credit Transfer** of payments made towards Early Care and/or After Care towards an *existing* 2027 camp registration with Early Care and/or After Care included

All payments made towards Early Care/ and/or After Care fees are **non-refundable after May 4, 2026**.

No-Shows / Early Departures

- Campers who **do not show up** for camp are **not eligible** for refunds, credit transfers or credits.
- Campers who **arrive late or leave early** are **not eligible** for a prorated refund, credit transfer or credit.

Medical / Emergency Exceptions

We understand that unexpected situations occur. If a camper cannot attend due to a verified emergency, we may offer **additional flexibility**.

Eligible reasons may include:

- Camper illness/injury preventing attendance *(documentation will be requested)*
- Unforeseen Family emergency (as appropriate)

In these cases, the camp may offer a credit up to the full amount paid (including non-refundable deposit), depending on timing and documentation.

It is up to the discretion of the Camp Director and Executive Director to determine if a credit is to be given.

Camp-Initiated Cancellations (Weather/Safety/Program Needs)

If 4-H Camp Owahta cancels a session due to safety concerns, weather emergency, facility issues, **or** low enrollment, families may choose one of the following per affected registration;

- **100% refund (including non-refundable deposit) or**
- **100% credit** toward another summer 2027 camp registration (new or existing)

***If camp runs but adjusts activities due to weather/safety, this does not qualify for refunds.** *If camp is canceled due to low enrollment, families will be notified at least 30 days before the start of their camp session.*

Code of Conduct Agreement

All campers are required to follow the 4-H Camp Code of Conduct. The code of conduct provides a framework for what we expect from our campers (and staff) while they are at camp. These expectations allow us to create a safe and welcoming space to everyone. Please be sure to read these expectations with your camper prior to their first day of camp. When campers arrive at camp they will be given these expectations again to read, ask questions and sign.

The campers within the Leader-In-Training (LIT) and Counselor-In-Training (CIT) program are held to a higher standard of conduct due to taking on leadership roles. The LIT Expectations and CIT Expectations are to be followed by all LIT and CIT participants. Those who do not follow the expectations may be removed from the program and/or not accepted next summer.

4-H Camp Code of Conduct

Head: Think Clearly and Make Informed Decisions

- I will follow all camp rules, schedules, and guidelines, and comply with the expectations of camp staff and volunteers.
- I will make thoughtful choices that promote safety, belonging, and learning for myself and others.
- I will accept outcomes of camp activities and contests with grace and be open to new ideas and feedback.
- I will ask for what I need and be clear about what that is and let staff or fellow campers know how they can help.

Heart: Build Strong Relationships and Show Loyalty

- In words and actions, I will treat all campers, staff, and volunteers with kindness, respect, and understanding.
- I will avoid bullying, harassment, or exclusionary behavior, help others feel welcome and valued and speak up if I witness this behavior.
- I will refrain from inappropriate behavior in public or private settings.
- I will report any unsafe conditions, accidents, or concerns to camp staff immediately.

Hands: Serve Others and Contribute to the Camp Community

- I will participate fully in all camp activities, be on time, and complete assigned responsibilities to the best of my ability.
- I will work cooperatively with others and support group decisions by listening to everyone's perspectives and opinions.
- I will respect camp property, the environment, and the belongings of others.
- I will be a positive role model, demonstrating responsibility, teamwork, and leadership.

Health: Maintain Personal Well-Being and Promote Safety

- I will not possess or use illegal drugs (including the misuse of prescription drugs), alcohol, tobacco or marijuana products or paraphernalia.
- I will not possess or use firearms (except in supervised Shooting Sports programs) or harmful objects.
- I will follow all safety guidelines, including staying in designated camp areas.
- I will prioritize my physical, emotional, and mental well-being by listening to my body, taking care of my needs, and speaking up when needed.
- I will support the health and safety of others including fellow campers, camp staff, and the camp community.

Consequences

Failure to comply with the camp code of conduct can result in any of the following consequences, depending on the severity of the situation:

1. Camper will receive a verbal warning by Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director stating the specific behavior that goes against the Code of Conduct. The Camp Director/ Assistant Director and camper will review the Code of Conduct again and give the camper an opportunity to ask questions.
2.Camper may remain at camp but may possibly be prohibited from specific activities and/or from attending in the future.
3. Camper may be asked to leave camp. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be called, and the camper will be sent home at the family's expense. **No refund will be issued.**

LIT Expectations

Head: Think Clearly and Make Informed Decisions

As an LIT, I will:

- Follow all camp rules, schedules, and guidelines and meet the expectations of camp staff and volunteers.
- Be prepared and on time for activities, transitions, meals, and any LIT responsibilities.
- Use good judgment, especially when younger campers are watching.
- Ask questions when I'm unsure and check in with staff when I need support.
- Accept feedback and coaching respectfully and try again when I make mistakes.

Heart: Build Strong Relationships and Show Loyalty

As an LIT, I will:

- Treat all campers, staff, and volunteers with kindness, respect, and understanding.
- Help create a welcoming environment by including others and being mindful of words, tone,

and body language.
- Avoid bullying, teasing, harassment, exclusionary behavior, hazing, and 'jokes' that hurt others.
- Be a positive influence: encourage younger campers, help de-escalate drama, and seek staff help when needed.
- Speak up and tell staff if I see unsafe behavior, a camper in distress, or a situation that feels wrong.

Hands: Serve Others and Contribute to the Camp Community

As an LIT, I will:
- Participate fully in camp activities and complete any LIT responsibilities to the best of my ability.
- Help with camp routines when asked (set-up/clean-up, transitions, group organization, encouraging participation).
- Support group decisions by listening, cooperating, and modeling good teamwork.
- Treat camp property, the environment, and others' belongings with respect.
- Be a role model through actions—especially in cabins, waterfront, dining areas, and free time.

Health: Maintain Personal Well-Being and Promote Safety

As an LIT, I will:
- Not possess or use illegal drugs (including misuse of prescription drugs), alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana products or paraphernalia.
- Not possess or use firearms (except in supervised Shooting Sports programs) or harmful objects.
- Follow all safety guidelines, including staying in designated camp areas and following supervision expectations.
- Take care of my well-being (rest, hydration, nutrition, sun protection) so I can lead by example.
- Report injuries, illness, unsafe conditions, or concerns to camp staff immediately.

Additional LIT Expectations

Be a Role Model
- I will model the behavior I want younger campers to follow (language, attitude, participation, sportsmanship).
- I will not encourage rule-breaking or 'test the limits,' even as a joke.

Support Younger Campers
- I may remind campers of expectations in a calm and respectful way.
- If a camper won't follow expectations or a situation escalates, I will get staff immediately.
- I understand I am not responsible for enforcing consequences; that is the staff's job.

Set Boundaries and Privacy
- I will keep all interactions appropriate and respectful in all settings (public and private).
- I will not share younger camper's or my peer's personal information, health needs, or behavior issues with others.

- I will follow camp rules about photos/videos and social media and respect everyone's privacy.
- I understand I am not a staff member and will not be alone with campers or supervise independently.

Put Safety As Number One

- I will tell staff right away if:
- someone is hurt, sick, missing, or unsafe,
- there is bullying, harassment, or threats,
- I see substances, weapons, or dangerous behavior,
- I'm unsure what to do in a situation.

I understand that LIT privileges (special activities, leadership opportunities, recommendations, etc.) depend on meeting expectations.

Respectful Behavior & Bullying Prevention

At 4-H Camp Owahta, we are committed to creating a camp community where every camper feels safe, respected, included, and valued. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and repeated unkind behavior have no place at camp and are not consistent with our 4-H Camp Code of Conduct or values of Belonging, Learning & Growing, Positive Relationships, Lifelong Skills, Community, Stewardship & Adventure and Camper Voice.

Campers are expected to:

- Treat all campers, staff, volunteers, and guests with kindness and respect.
- Include others and help create a welcoming camp community.
- Respect and celebrate differences in backgrounds, identities, abilities, opinions, and experiences.
- Use appropriate language and behavior at all times.
- Speak up or seek help from a staff member if they witness bullying or unkind behavior.

Examples of bullying may include but are not limited to:

- Repeated teasing, name-calling, or put-downs.
- Excluding others from activities or social groups.
- Spreading rumors or encouraging others to exclude someone.
- Intimidation, threats, or attempts to embarrass another camper.
- Physical aggression or unwanted physical contact.
- Damaging another person's belongings.
- Bullying through notes, messages, or other forms of communication.

Respect for Younger Campers

Older campers play an important role in helping create a positive camp environment. We expect all older campers to treat younger campers with patience, kindness, and respect. **Teasing, intimidating, excluding, or taking advantage of younger campers will not be tolerated.**

If Bullying Occurs

If staff witness, receive reports of, or become aware of bullying behavior, they will:

1. Intervene immediately to ensure the safety and well-being of those involved. If they do not feel comfortable, they will seek out a staff member who is.
2. Speak with all individuals involved separately to gather information.
3. Address the behavior and provide appropriate guidance and changes when necessary. The way this is conducted will look different depending on the scenario.
4. Develop a plan to help prevent the behavior from continuing (*Parents/guardians will be notified when needed/appropriate.)*
5. Monitor the situation and provide support to affected campers.

Repeated or serious bullying behavior will be considered a third chance on the 4-H Camp Code of Conduct and may result in the dismissal from camp. No refund will be issued.

BEHAVIORS THAT MAY REQUIRE A CAMPER TO LEAVE CAMP EARLY:

- Non-compliance or Failure to comply with Camp Code of Conduct, camp policies and/or directions from camp staff.
- Consistent inability or refusal to comply with camp routines.
- Repeated non-participation (refusing to participate in programs and activities, refusing to go to certain activities.)
- Recurring disruptive behavior without response to redirection.
- Profanity, obscene gestures, indecent conduct.
- Fighting, bullying, threatening and other forms of violence or aggressive behavior towards self or others.
- Theft or vandalism, including damaging, destroying, or defacing personal or camp property.
- Severe homesickness (missing home) or failure to thrive (not eating, sleeping, bathing).
- Behaviors that pose a safety risk to themselves or others
- Medical, mental health, or behavioral concerns that require a level of care beyond what camp can reasonably provide
- Public display of affection between anyone.
- Gambling or betting with money.
- ***Any behavior, action or situation the Camp Director feels is unsafe for the camp community and/or the camper***

SERIOUS BEHAVIORS THAT REQUIRE A CAMPER TO LEAVE CAMP IMMEDIATELY:

**These behaviors are treated as a third chance as per the Camp Code of Conduct.*

- Possession and/or use of cigarettes, cigars or other tobacco products.
- Possession and/or use of marijuana, vape cartridges, pens, edibles or other products that contain cannabis and/or THC
- Possession and/or use of matches, lighters, candles, or other combustibles.
- Possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs.
- Possession and/or use of a weapon, including but not limited to pocket knife, sheath knife, folding knife, slingshot or firearm.
- Possession and/or use of fireworks
- Sexual, racial, religious or any other forms of harassment. This includes repetitive, indecent conduct whether it is directed at another person **or** indirectly.
- Leaving camp property without authorization
- Running away from camp
- Being in restricted camp areas without staff permission
- Physical violence, fighting, threatening/physical abuse.
- Repeated or serious bullying or harassment of another person (staff, volunteer, camper, etc.)
- ***Any behavior, action or situation the Camp Director feels is unsafe for the camp community and/or the camper***



Summer Staff

At camp, your child is surrounded by a caring, enthusiastic and well-prepared team whose top priority is creating a safe, welcoming, and fun environment. Below is a quick overview of the key staff members you may see or hear from during the summer and how each helps your camper have a great experience.

Camp Director - oversees the entire camp operation, including safety procedures, staffing, daily logistics, and overall camper experience. They provide leadership to all staff, coordinate emergency protocols, and serve as a primary point of contact for families when needed/appropriate.

Assistant Camp Director - supports day-to-day camp operations and helps ensure everything runs smoothly behind the scenes. They assist with supervision, scheduling, lesson development, camper support, and stepping in quickly to problem-solve throughout the day.

Day Camp Director -coordinates all day camp programming and logistics, including drop-off/pick-up procedures, daily schedules, and camper transitions. They help make sure the day campers have a great camp experience, feel included, supported, and set up for a successful week.

Program Area Directors - lead the camp programming areas that make each day exciting. They plan and lead age-appropriate lessons, ensure supplies and spaces are ready, supervise staff in their area, and support campers as they learn new skills. The Program Directors may include;
- Outdoor Adventure (wilderness skills, archery, low ropes course)
- Arts & Crafts
- Nature
- Music & Theater
- Garden and Small Animals

*Sports and Rec is not assigned to one specific person

Waterfront Director- manages all waterfront operations, including swim schedules, buddy board, boating activities, safety procedures, and supervision. They coordinate lifeguard coverage and ensure campers are grouped and supported appropriately in and around the water.

Lifeguards- actively supervise all swim and waterfront activities, enforce safety rules, and respond quickly if support is needed. Their job is to keep the waterfront fun and safe, so campers can build skills and confidence in the water.

Camp Nurse- The Camp Nurse supports camper health and wellness each day, handling medications, first aid, and health check-ins as needed. They also partner with camp leadership to support any medical concerns and help campers feel comfortable if they're not feeling their best.

Senior Counselors- are the heart of the camper experience. They supervise cabins/groups, provide daily guidance and encouragement, and help campers feel safe, included, and cared for. They also assist in planning special events/activities and provide support in programming areas. They're trained to support campers through missing home, conflict resolution, and the everyday ups and downs of camp life.

Junior Counselors (17 years old0- assist in supervising cabins/groups, provide daily guidance and encouragement and bring excitement and enthusiasm. Assist in planning and leading special events/activities and provide support in programming areas as needed.

Camp Kitchen Manager - plays a major role in keeping campers healthy, energized, and cared for throughout the week. They plan and oversee all meals and snacks, coordinate food ordering and safe storage, and ensure meals are prepared according to health and safety guidelines. They also help accommodate dietary needs and allergies whenever possible, so families can feel confident that campers are being fed safely and thoughtfully. ***We are a no nut facility!***

Camp Kitchen Assistant - supports the daily flow of the kitchen and helps make mealtimes run smoothly. They assist with food preparation, meal service, cleaning and sanitizing, and keeping the kitchen organized and on schedule. Their behind-the-scenes work helps ensure that every camper gets nutritious meals on time and that the dining experience stays positive, efficient, and welcoming.

Camp Maintenance / Grounds Support - helps keep camp running safely and comfortably every day. They support the upkeep of lawns, buildings, and program areas, respond quickly to maintenance needs, and help ensure buildings and grounds are safe for campers and staff. From fixing a door latch to checking walkways and supporting facility safety checks, their work provides peace of mind and helps camp stay a clean, secure place for everyone.

Emergency Preparedness and Protocols

The safety of our campers and staff is our top priority. All camp staff are trained and regularly practice emergency procedures for a variety of scenarios, including but not limited to; drowning response, medical emergency, fire, lost camper/staff, tornado, and active-threat situations. While we take proactive steps to reduce risk through supervision, planning, and clear safety policies, we are prepared to respond quickly and effectively if an emergency occurs. In any situation where there is an immediate risk to safety, the appropriate **emergency services will be contacted first.** Once the immediate danger or threat has passed, families will be notified by phone, email, and text (SMS). If an emergency requires immediate family response or action, communication will be sent as soon as possible through our UltraCamp registration system as an SMS text message. If the incident has been resolved and no immediate response is needed, families will be notified within 24 hours. The information sent to families will provide the necessary details and appropriate next steps if needed.

****Be sure to have the correct phone numbers in your UltraCamp Account. If an emergency occurs the Primary Contact will be contacted first.****

The Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director and Camp Nurse continuously monitor weather conditions including but not limited to air quality, thunderstorms, heat and other extreme weather conditions.

Health Care

Our Camp Nurse is on site 24/7 when *overnight camp* is in session and is available for medications, emergencies and other medical situations. In addition to the Camp Nurse a handful of our summer camp staff are also trained in CPR and First Aid, so in case of an emergency they can act quickly and effectively.

Our Camp Nurse and/or Camp Director will contact you if:

- There is a medical emergency
- Your camper needs to be seen by an outside practitioner
- Your camper needs to spend the night in the nurse's office
- Your camper menstruates for the first time
- They have a general medical question or concern about your camper

Medication Vacations

If you are considering taking your child off of any medication or changing dosage prior to camp, please call the Camp Director at 607-391-2668 or email us at owahta@cornell.edu to partner with us regarding this decision. Camp is an immersive, socially intensive, 24/7 atmosphere full of new experiences and it may not be the appropriate time for a "medication vacation."

Dental and Optical

A hard-shell case is a great way to protect your glasses at camp. We recommend bringing an extra pair of glasses. If your child wears contacts, remember that there might not be access to a sink and mirror every morning and evening. If your child needs a retainer at night, please remember to pack it with adequate cleaning supplies.

Communicable Diseases

If your camper has been exposed to any communicable diseases within 3 weeks before arriving at camp, such as measles, mumps or rubella, you must notify us immediately at 607-391-2660 or email us at owahta@cornell.edu.

Head Lice

Have your camper inspected for head lice two weeks prior to departure and again, immediately before camp begins. When you arrive at camp all campers will be checked for lice by the Camp Nurse. If lice is discovered during this check parents/guardians have two options: - Leave camp and treat the camper's hair/belongings and come the next morning for a re-check **or** ask about availability in another week while the child is treated at home.

During camp if lice is discovered on your camper, they will be required to be picked up immediately. If campers were in a cabin with others the cabin will be vacated and cleaned accordingly. Campers may

return to camp once the lice has been treated and no other lice is present.

Head lice are common among school-aged children and are not an indication of cleanliness or hygiene. Our goal is to manage concerns promptly, safely and respectfully while minimizing disruption to the camp experience.

We understand that parents are often surprised when notified that their child has signs of head lice and may feel confident that their child does not have lice. However, to protect the health and well-being of all campers, determinations regarding the presence of head lice and a camper's ability to remain at camp will be made by the Camp Nurse in consultation with the Camp Director.

Ticks

As an outdoor camp, one of our main goals is providing the opportunity to explore and enjoy the woods and field safely. Our staff will be highly aware and knowledgeable of ticks. We recognize that ticks are an ongoing issue in the Finger Lakes region, and therefore we take precautions to reduce the risk of tick bites.

We highly recommend following these best practices when preparing for camp.

- Light colored clothing to be able to detect crawling ticks
- Long pants and long sleeved shirts
- A hat (in which long hair can be tied up and be tucked into, if appropriate)
- Close-toed shoes
- Non-aerosol insect repellent
- High socks, (for tucking long pant legs into) - fun patterns are a plus!

We will do multiple tick checks throughout each day of camp and will provide private, well-lit spaces with mirrors. If a camper has an embedded tick, medically trained staff will take out the tick. We will call parents in the event of an embedded engorged tick and discuss follow-up options at that time. All embedded ticks that were taken off the camper during camp will be kept by the Camp Nurse for the parents to take at pick-up.

We strongly encourage families to teach campers how to conduct a thorough self-tick check before camp begins. Campers should be comfortable checking all areas of their body, including the scalp, behind the ears, under the arms, around the waistline, behind the knees, and other skin folds, creases, and hard-to-see areas where ticks may attach.

The NYS Department of Health Brochure on Ticks & Lyme Disease is located within our Document Center.

A Typical Day At Camp

SAMPLE SCHEDULE: * Subject to Change*				
7:00 am	Wake Up/Personal Hygiene		2:30 pm	Overnight Swim
7:45 am	Opening Circle & Morning Thought		3:45 pm	Shower/ Clean-Up from Swim/ Day Camp Wrap-Up
8:00 am	Breakfast		4:00 pm	Day Camp Pick Up
8:45 am	Cabin Clean-Up		5:00 pm	Free Time/ Choices OR Special Program Block
9:00 am	Day Camp Drop Off		5:45 pm	Closing Circle/Evening Thought Waiters Call
9:15 am	First Program Block		6:00 pm	Dinner
10:15 am	Second Program Block		7:00 pm	Evening Program Block
11:30 am	Free Choice		7:45 pm	Snack
12 pm	Waiters Call		8pm	Campfire
12:30 pm	Lunch		8:45 pm	Reflection Time/ Get Ready for Bed
1:15 pm	Day Camp Swim/ Overnight Rest		9:30 pm	"Lights Out
2:15pm	Get Ready for Swim- Overnight/ Day Camp- Choices OR Camp Store			

Campers will spend time throughout the day with youth of various ages, helping to create the welcoming community that makes 4-H Camp Owahta unique. While program blocks, rest time, and cabin time are generally spent with peers in a similar age group, shared meals, evening programs, all-camp activities, and camp traditions provide opportunities for campers to build friendships, learn from one another, and feel connected to the larger camp community.

LITs (Leaders-in-Training) experience the best of both worlds during their week at camp. Designated portions of the day are spent learning, practicing, and developing leadership skills through hands-on activities, mentorship, and team-building experiences. The remainder of their time is spent enjoying traditional camp activities with the whole camp, building friendships, and participating in the fun and adventure that make Camp Owahta special.

CITs (Counselors-In-Training) will spend the majority of each day participating in CIT-specific activities focused on developing leadership, problem-solving, risk management, activity planning, and working with younger campers. As a program designed to bridge the gap between camper and counselor, CITs take on increased responsibility while continuing to participate in select camp activities, traditions, and community experiences.

Camp Store

- The Camp Store will return for Summer 2027! Families may add Camp Store funds to their camper's account during registration for use during designated Camp Store times throughout the week. Campers may only use funds that have been deposited into their account prior to camp, as additional Camp Store funds cannot be added during a camp session.

- Camp Store funds must be deposited through the camper's account during registration.
- **Cash, checks, and credit cards are not accepted at camp.**
- Campers may not contact parents/guardians during camp to request additional Camp Store funds.
- Merchandise and snack availability may vary throughout the summer, and specific items **cannot be guaranteed.**
- Example Camp Store prices include:

Water Bottles: $15+
T-Shirts: $12+
Sweatshirts: $30+
Camp Souvenirs & Knick Knacks: $8+
Snacks: $2+

Any unused Camp Store funds must be requested by email no later than September 15, 2027. Funds remaining in your Account after this date will be considered a donation to 4-H Camp Owahta.



Sunday Arrival For Overnight Campers-*Process Subject to Change*

1. Overnight campers should arrive on Sunday afternoon between 2:00-3:00 p.m.
2. When you arrive please park in the loop and walk up to the front porch with all your camper's belongings. There will be staff nearby to guide you on where to go and where to put all of your items.
3. Once you have dropped off all your belongings you will start the check-in process on the front porch (inside the Dining Hall if raining)
4. The check-in process consists of three "stations"- Attendance/Camp Code of Conduct Review, Gear Check, Nurse's Station.



- Attendance- confirm your camper's name, cabin assignment, parent will sign them in. *The parent/guardian signing the camper is must have a Photo ID.*
- Camp Code of Conduct Review- campers will have a chance to read over the Camp Code of Conduct again, ask question and sign a paper copy
- Gear Check- a staff member will review the Overnight Camp Packing List with the parents/guardians and camper(s) to ensure they have everything they need. If a camper forgot something the parent will need to set up a time to come drop it off. If the parent is not able to come back with the missing item camp leadership will do our best to provide what is needed. *If camp has to purchase a packing list item for a camper an additional fee will be added to the parent's Account.*
    - This is the time for campers to give their parents/guardians their cellphones and other electronic devices.
- Nurse's Station- review of all camp health records, medications, answer any questions/concerns, conduct a lice check and health check
    - If a camper is feeling sick or exhibiting unexplained symptoms the Camp Nurse has the right to send the child home
    - If the Camp Nurse or Camp Director notice head lice, the parent/guardian has two options; leave camp and treat the camper's hair/belongings and come the next morning for a re-check **or** ask about availability in another week while the child is treated at home.

5. Once you have successfully gone through the three stations it is time to say good bye to your camper. We recommend a short, loving goodbye. When goodbyes are too long it sometimes makes it harder for

campers (and parents) to separate. *Families will not walk their camper(s) to their cabins.*

6. Throughout the check-in process the Camp Director/Assistant Camp Director will be around to answer any questions, concerns or comments you may have. *Please note- this is not a time to share new information about a camper.* All information about a camper should be shared within required camp paperwork or shared with the Nurse.
7. The Kitchen Manager will also be around to answer any questions or concerns regarding meals and dietary needs.
8. Check-in will wrap up at 3pm. At this time if they have not already done so, campers will be moving and settling into their cabins and getting ready for our first activity.
9. **If your family needs a later drop-off time, please email owahta@cornell.edu as soon as possible to make arrangements. We need at least a week's notice (7 days). If notice is not given within this timeframe, we can not guarantee the timing will work.**

Check Out Process For Overnight Campers

Check-out day is on Friday between 4-5 PM – for all overnight campers.

1. When you arrive please park in the loop and walk up to the Dining Hall.

2. Once you arrive at the Dining Hall you will go through a similar process as check-in. **Please do not go get your camper. Your camper will be notified when they can join you.**

3. The first station you will visit is Attendance. You will be required to show your photo ID to sign out your camper. You will also get a brief summary of how their week went.

4. The second station is the Nurse's Station. The Nurse will return any camper medications and/or camper items. The nurse will let you know how the week went and if there were any minor injuries or things to report.

5. Once you have gone through both stations your camper will join you and is officially under your supervision.

   If you are running late for pick-up, please reach out to owahta@cornell.edu **and** give us a call at the camp phone letting us know. *If we do not hear that you are running late or do not receive any contact from the family by 5:00pm we will charge an additional $5 per 10 mins*. **All campers must be picked up by 5:30pm.** The safety of our campers is our highest priority.

   If a parent/guardian has not arrived as expected and we are unable to reach any contacts listed within their Account by 5:35 p.m., we will contact local law enforcement for assistance in ensuring the camper is safely reunited with a parent, guardian, or authorized pick-up person.

Packing List For Overnight Camp

Please be sure to label every item that your camper brings to camp. This will assist us in making sure that your child leaves camp with what they brought. Make sure to pack enough clothes and personal items for a week of camp **plus** extra.

When packing, be sure to look at the weather for your camper's week at camp. We will be outside as much as possible, so be sure to pack extras of everything especially; socks, shirts and pants.

- Short Sleeve Shirts (6-9)
- Long Sleeve Shirts (3-5)
- Shorts (5-7)
- Long pants (3-5)
- Socks (7-10 pairs!)
- Underwear (extra)
- Toothpaste
- Feminine Products if needed
- Light jacket or sweatshirt (2 preferred)
- Raincoat
- Hiking boots or durable rubber boots
- Sneakers
- Shower Shoes (for shower area only, flip flops are acceptable)
- Sturdy Sandals (must have back strap and CLOSED toe shoes)
- Swimsuit or Swim Shorts
- Book and/or journal
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Writing implements & self-addressed and stamped envelopes
- Personal hygiene items as needed
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Bug spray/ insect repellent
- Hat (optional)
- Towels (1 for beach and 1 for shower):2
- Pajamas
- Sleeping bag OR Twin Sheets & blankets
- Pillow
- Shampoo
- Soap
- Washcloth
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Musical Instrument (if not fragile) (optional)

Crocs may only be used during showers or in cabins. They are not acceptable water shoes or sneakers.

*This list is not all exhaustive, please modify it for your child's needs.

Items to Leave At Home

- Clothing with illegal or obscene art or language on it.
- Cigarettes, cigars, tobacco products, matches or lighters, vapes
- THC or CBD products of any kind
- Any and all items considered to be controlled substances
- Candles or lanterns (unless battery operated).
- Food, snacks, gum, etc. (food is not allowed in cabins due to wildlife concerns). ABSOLUTELY NO PEANUTS, NUTS or SNACKS CONTAINING PEANUT BUTTER!
- Potentially dangerous weapons including pocket knives, folding knives, sheath knives, hatchets.
- Hand-held video games
- Personal stereos (cd players, MP3 players, iPod's etc.)
- Cell phones, including camera phones
- Expensive cameras/jewelry
- Personal sports equipment
- Live animals
- Pressurized aerosol sprays. Please use pump spray bottles (ex: hair spray, insect repellent.)

**** The Camp Director has the right to hold onto these items for the week and will return them to their families on Friday****





Camp Transportation For Day Campers

DAY CAMP BUS – MON. - FRI. (WEEKLY)

This summer we will be providing limited camp transportation for our day camp program. The campers will be accompanied by at least one staff member while traveling. Campers are expected to observe all safety rules and behave appropriately and according to the driver's rules.

There are limited spaces for camp transportation this summer. It will be on a first come first serve basis.

All campers are asked to follow all of 4-H Camp Owahta's safety rules as listed below while being transported by camp vehicles:

1. Campers must remain seated at all times. If in a camp van, must wear their seatbelt.
2. Campers must keep hands and arms in windows and must not throw objects from windows.
3. Behavior that is unsafe to the camper, the driver and/or other passengers is strictly prohibited.
4. Behavior that is distracting to the driver is strictly prohibited.
5. Campers are expected to follow the directions as given by the designated staff person or driver.
6. Campers must wait for a staff person to enter and/or exit the vehicle.

We will not wait for campers and/or parents, so be sure to arrive at bus locations early!*

BUS LOCATIONS: (3 STOPS)	Morning Drop Off	Afternoon Pick Up
Cortlandville Town Hall, 3577 Terrace Rd, Cortland, NY 13045	8:15AM	4:40PM
Cortland County Office Building, 60 Central Ave., Cortland, NY 13045	8:30AM	4:25PM
McGraw United Methodist Church, 20 E Main St. McGraw, NY 13101	8:45AM	4:10PM

PERSONAL CAR – Families are welcome to drive their campers to and from camp. For those driving to camp, when you arrive please park in the loop and walk up to the Day Camp Building (the building across from the Dining Hall). You will be met by a staff person who will sign your camper in/ out every day. They will also conduct a brief daily health check to ensure your child is ready and healthy enough to come to camp. **When dropping off and picking up your camper a photo ID is required.**

Day Camp Times: Drop-Off: 9am Pick-Up: 4pm

At pick-up you must check-out with a staff member before leaving camp with your child. Do not just take your child and leave, we must go through the sign-out process.

Packing List For Day Campers

Please be sure to label every item that your camper brings to camp. This will assist us in making sure that your child leaves camp with what they brought. Day campers should bring a backpack everyday with all of their items. The camper should be able to hold and transport their backpack on their own.

When packing for the day, be sure to check the weather. We will be outside as much as possible, so please pack accordingly.

REGULAR DAY (Monday- Friday)	**THURSDAY OVERNIGHT** (Campers ages 8+ years old may choose to stay on Thursday evening)
Swimsuit and Towel	Sleeping Bag **or** twin sheets and blankets
Rain Gear (jacket and pants) and Durable Rubber Boots	Pillow
Reusable Water Bottle	Pajamas
Personal Hygiene Items (as needed)	Flashlight with Batteries
Sneakers or Hiking Boots (NO Crocs)	Toothbrush and Toothpaste
Water Shoes (must have back strap and CLOSED toe shoes) (NO Crocs)	Personal Hygiene Items (deodorant, etc.)
Sunscreen and/or Bug Spray (if applicable)	Feminine Products if needed
Extra Change of Clothes in a zip lock bag	Clothes for Friday: shirt, socks, pants/shorts, underwear
Hat (optional)	Jacket or Sweatshirt
Warm Outer Layer (sweatshirt or jacket)	Wash Cloth
Book and/or Journal (optional)	Comfort Item (optional)
Backpack	Shampoo, Soap, Shower Towel (optional)
Lunch and Snack IS PROVIDED	**Campers may or may not be able to shower on Friday**

Directions To 4-H Camp Owahta:

We are located 45 minutes south of Syracuse, NY; 50 minutes North of Binghamton, NY; and 1 hour 45 minutes from Corning, NY.

Our address is: 4826 Knecht Rd., McGraw, NY 13101

From ROUTE 81-EXIT #10, travel south - Route 41 through McGraw to Syrian Hill Road. (approx. 3 miles) take a left turn onto Syrian Hill Road traveling North approx. 3 Miles to 4-H Camp Road. Entrance is on the right side of the road where our 4-H Camp Owahta sign.