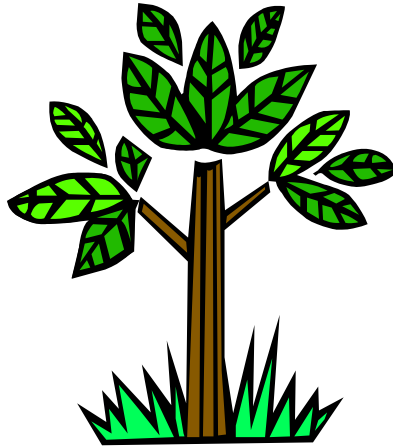


Wooden Acres Adventure Programs



CAMPER & PARENT MANUAL

Please read this updated version!

www.woodenacres.com

info@woodenacres.com

You Made the Right Choice in Choosing Wooden Acres Adventure Programs!

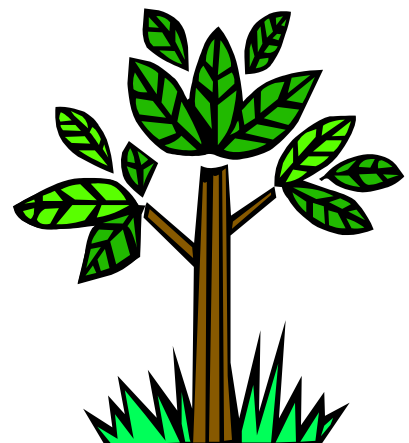
A vital decision for both parent and child, the choice of summer camp involves much more than the simple selection of a vacation. Many factors must be considered – camp philosophy, purpose, programs, age group serviced, location, facilities, staff, record of performance, and relationship to the community. Camp is a concentrated experience, condensing into a short span of time, lessons and opportunities, which may have significant after-effects.

Our camp will provide your child with the vital essentials of preparation for significant living, fun in the sun, companionship, citizenship, encouragement of skills and talents, a concerned focus on mental and physical skill development, reinforced Jewish values, sound ethical standards, and the example-setting of respected adult counselors and leaders.

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

small bunk sizes □ high staff to camper ratio □ safe, nurturing environment □ guaranteed personal attention to meet every child's individual needs □ we will exceed all your expectations □ we pay attention to details □ excellence in programming and facilities □

Thank you for choosing Wooden Acres Adventure Programs.



PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Wooden Acres is located in Michigan in a small town called Lexington, approximately 1½ hours east of Detroit. It is set on beautiful countryside at a camp formerly known as Camp Stapleton. It is bound by wooded acres and is on Lake Huron. The camp will have children aged 7-15 year old split into Juniors and Seniors. The program is determined by the grade/age of your child.

We have a fleet of canoes, sailboats, kayaks, windsurfers and a complete water-skiing program. Not to forget the water wonderland of water toys on our very own private beach on Lake Huron!

The camp includes a nature farm with a variety of animals and on-site overnight camping and cookout areas, sports fields, basketball and volleyball courts, and much, much more. Our modern kitchen facilities provide kosher-style meals.

Campers in each bunk map out a balanced weekly program together with their counselor. The emphasis is on fun, in a safe and supervised environment that provides opportunities for learning and personal skill development.

A TYPICAL DAY AT WOODEN ACRES ADVENTURE PROGRAMS

7:30	Wake-up
8:20	Flagpole
8:30	Breakfast
9:15	Cabin and area clean up
10:00	1 st activity
11:30	2 nd activity
12:50	Flagpole
1:00	Lunch
1:45	Rest period, letter writing, mail pick-up
3:00	3 rd activity
4:15	4 th activity
5:30	Showertime
6:20	Flagpole
6:30	Dinner
7:15	Free Play
8:00	Evening Activity
9:30 or 11:00	Lights out: time dependent on age group.





STAFF

Our staff are talented and caring individuals committed to working with young children and adolescents in a Jewish environment. Program staff are trained and experienced in such fields as social work, education, recreation and management. Our unit and specialty supervisors are experienced and where necessary, certified in their respective fields. Every night, staff are on duty checking the cabins to ensure your child's safety. At 1:00 a.m. all staff are in their cabins.

MEDICAL EXAM REQUIRED

All campers must have a current camper medical report on file with us.



If your child has had a physical since the fall of 2008, your physician may complete the medical form based on that exam. Please have your child's form completed and sent to us by May 1, 2009.

MEDICAL PROTOCOL

Wooden Acres provides a first-rate clinic, with a doctor and nurse to take care of all your children's medical needs. **If your child will be on medication while at camp, please download the Camper Medication Schedule, complete and return with all your other required paper work by May 1st.**

Please label medication clearly. Medications are given out before every meal and at bedtime. If this schedule is not appropriate for your child, please let us know. Medication is to be given to us on the same day that you drop off your child's luggage (*See departure schedule.) Please place medication (in original containers) in a Ziploc-type bag. Include written directions on our **Camper Medication Schedule. Please note if dosage or instructions differ from what is stated on the bottle.**



All medication should be dropped off with luggage. (*See departure schedule.)

Parents will be notified regarding the health of your child if they stay overnight in the clinic, leave camp for treatment or must receive an x-ray, antibiotic or injections. The medical care of your child is of the utmost concern to us.

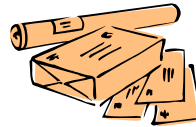
If you wish to discuss your child's medical needs, please call camp and speak with the nurse/doctor prior to your camper's arrival.



MAIL AND PACKAGES

Campers will receive mail daily. Please write, fax or e-mail your child often. It is a great way for children to keep up on what is going on at home. Children are required to write three times a week. Mail is slow, so please be patient. If your child is using the fax option, you will receive their letters on a timelier basis. Please provide only white paper and pens for fax clarity. Please pre-address fax paper so we have a clear and accurate fax number to send to. A postcard will be sent home from your child upon their arrival at camp. Mail should be addressed to:

Your camper's name
Wooden Acres Adventure Programs
3753 South Lakeshore
Lexington MI 48450
Unit Name



Please- **NO boxes.**
Padded or large
envelopes are fine.

Make sure e-mail and fax mail are identified with your child's first and last names and the name of their unit.

The unit names are as follows:

Sunrise for campers entering grades 2/3
Frontier for campers entering grades 4/5
Mountainside for campers entering grades 6
Lakeside for campers entering grades 7
Summit for campers entering grades 8/9
Pre-CIT for campers entering grade 10

Faxes and E-mail are printed once a day and distributed with the snail mail. **Please do not send e-mail attachments or pictures**

PHONE CALLS

Please feel free to call camp with any issues, concerns or questions you may have. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. until 1:00 a.m. seven days a week. After 1:00 a.m. there is an answering machine that will provide emergency extension numbers. We guarantee that your calls will be returned as quickly as possible by the director or one of the assistant directors assigned to your child's unit.



PARENT'S VACATIONS!

If you will be away from home at any time during your child's stay at camp, it is vital that you inform camp prior to your departure to let us know where you can be reached. Please send this information in writing to us prior to the start of your child's session or as soon as you have the information. Please verify that your emergency contacts will not be out of town when you are.

THE CAMP MUST BE AWARE OF HOW TO REACH PARENTS/GUARDIANS/or EMERGENCY CONTACTS DURING YOUR CHILD'S STAY!

CLOTHING AND OTHER ITEMS (There is a clothing list on the website.)

We strongly recommend that you do not send anything valuable to camp. **Please expect that whatever clothing your child brings to camp may or may not return home.** Please label all clothing and items with your child's name. Your child may bring walkmans, CD players, game boys, etc., but these items must stay in the bunk for rest times. This helps some children deal with homesickness. We will assist your child in keeping track of their belongings. Unfortunately, these types of items can be lost and camp cannot be held responsible.

***NO CELL PHONES, TV's, PAGERS, KNIVES or ANY TYPE OF WEAPONS WILL BE ALLOWED AT CAMP.** Do not send any clothing that has advertisements for alcohol, tobacco, any illegal substance or any type of obscene language on it!!

We suggest you purchase a unit t-shirt and a Shabbat t-shirt as well. Brody's on Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield carries these items, Wooden Acres Adventure Program Camp Clothing/Items as well as a variety of camping needs. **On Friday nights, every person must wear a white or blue t-shirt for Shabbat.**

GLASSES / CONTACT LENSES

Children who wear glasses/contact lenses should bring an extra pair to camp in case of breakage or loss. We will be happy to hold the extra for them. Please be sure to clearly label frames and contact lens cases.

BUNKING REQUESTS

Provide your requests on the Camper Information Form that you will find on the website. This allows the camper to list choices of whom he/she would like to bunk with. When making these choices, it is important to check to see that the child requested is registered for the same session as your child. We will honor all bunking requests when possible.



OUT OF CAMP TRIPS

Your child may be going on one or more out of camp trips or day outings. Due to scheduling, we will not call parents in advance of any day trips or outings.



BIRTHDAYS AT CAMP

Your child's birthday will be a day of celebration, with surprises, a cake and fun with their bunkmates.

They will also call you for their birthday. You may send up a gift package ahead of time that we will give to them on their birthday. Camp appropriate-non-valuables only please!

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO CAMP BY CHARTERED BUS. The bus will leave West Bloomfield High School on Orchard Lake Road for all programs. The busses leave on time, don't miss it! If you are unable to pick your child up at camp, you may choose to have them bus home for a fee of \$35. If for any reason you are dropping your child at camp rather than taking the bus, please notify camp.

LUGGAGE

Prior to camp, you will receive luggage tags that you need to use for your child's camp duffel and backpack. Footlockers and trunks are not allowed. Include a laundry bag marked clearly with camper's name. Please see departure schedule for when your luggage is to be dropped off at West Bloomfield High School. Depending on the program, it may be prior to your child's departure.

For security reasons NO lock boxes will be permitted.

SPENDING MONEY

Your child does not require any spending money unless they are attending the Teen Trips or will be at camp during session break. During Session Break, we go to on a day trip. This is paid for but the suggested amount of spending money is \$20.



SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Camp will not assume any responsibility for lost or damaged items. All protective gear is required and must be provided by the camper.

Staying in Lexington

When you come to pick up your child on the last day of their session, you have the opportunity to stay in Lexington Mi. there are many nice hotels in the area .

Directions to Wooden Acres Camp

An easy 1 1/2 hour drive

696 E to 94 E. Follow signs to Port Huron. Slight left at I 94 /Pine Grove connector (signs for Lexington /State Highway 25/Pine Grove Ave) Continue to follow M25 PAST THE CITY OF LEXINGTON .5 miles outside the city is Wooden Acres. We are right after Lexington Park. Slow down and get onto the shoulder as the entrance is hard to see. Camp sign is on right. If you hit Walker road/Camp Ozanim you went too far. You will go through the cities of Port Huron and Lexington.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR FIRST-TIME CAMPERS (and first-time parents!)

1. Teach your child how to make a bed. This is an important part of the daily routine, and will be helpful when campers first arrive at camp.
2. Have your child practice folding and organizing clothing and other personal belongings. Neatness and organizational skills count when children live in group situations.
3. Your child will be showering at camp. Often young children are not accustomed to showering and are more comfortable with baths. Practice in showering at home will help the transition before they arrive at camp.
4. Talk to your child about camp and discuss any concerns he/she may have about their new camping experience. Feel free to contact us prior to camp to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's adjustment to camp.
5. Pre-addressed, stamped envelopes, postcards or fax paper will help insure that you and others receive mail from your camper. We will stress the importance of your child communicating with you on a regular basis.
6. Lots of kids bring a stuffed animal to camp. They're great for hugging when you're feeling lonely.
7. If at first camp isn't as wonderful as you expected it to be, give camp (and yourself) three full days before deciding on how you like camp.
8. Bring some zany clothes to camp—especially outrageous hats. You will find dozens of uses for them, and the other kids will beat a path to your cabin to borrow things.
9. Write home often, even if it's only a post card. Your parents are as anxious for mail as you are.
10. Give new things a chance, whether it's swimming or a hike. New skills and adventures are what camp is all about.



HOMESICKNESS

For most children (including those who have been to camp before), homesickness is part of the baggage that accompanies a stay at camp. Parents can play a big role in helping their child to overcome homesickness, both before and during camp.

Develop Realistic Expectations

Developing realistic expectations about camp is very important. Parents can sometimes over-glamorize the camp experience. (“Honey, you’re going to have the best time of your whole life!” or “You’ll make the greatest friends!”) Go ahead and talk about the fun they’ll have, but also talk about rainy days; about liking some people more than others (both campers and counselors); about the difficulty of making choices in the camp program (and about second choices and third choices). Discuss worries they might have. By doing this, you will help your child with their feelings, so they are better able to recognize and cope with them.

Create Coping Strategies Together

Explain to your child that twinges of homesickness are common and nothing to worry about. Reassure them of your confidence in their ability to overcome the normal problems of separating. Together, draw up a set of procedures for being at camp in advance. (“If you’re feeling homesick, what do you think you could do about it?”) Have the child work out a plan. It could include some of the following elements: talk to her/his counselor; talk to the unit leader; write letters to parents, grandparents and friends to ensure a steady supply of return mail; bring some hobby materials or some favorite games to play with others during free times in the day (free time is often when homesickness crops up). These activities help make a camper feel needed, important, and involved in the community. They are all ideas that counselors and the camp director will suggest too, and help to facilitate. But it helps a camper to think about them in advance with his/her parents.

In preparation for camp, children can start gradually with an overnight away and work up to weekends (perhaps at their grandparent’s house, or with a good friend from school). It is within the capacity of any school-age child to accept the fact that school, sports, camp, family life, or even life in general won’t always be perfect. So affirm both their positive and negative feelings or the reasons for them. “Homesickness is associated with a lot of negative emotions, but they aren’t so extreme that the children can’t overcome them. In fact it promotes coping skills.” The least homesick children are those who change what they can about the separation and adjust to what they can’t and that takes practice.

What to Expect

When children are first away from home, they may experience several days of mild to severe homesickness until they become adjusted to camp. Letters written during the first few days of camp may reflect this. Children generally gain independence and self-reliance from seeing their camp experience through to the finish. We will help your child feel connected to and supported by camp.

How Parents Can Help

At camp, many children will test their effect on their parents, and their own capacity to separate. At these times it can be difficult for parents to insist their child follow through with camp. However, for school age children, helping them deal with frustration, disappointment, conflict and sadness while remaining in their situation is appropriate. Giving your child confidence in their ability to cope with the difficulties of daily life and experience in handling an appropriate degree of discomfort and problems is good parenting, because it helps them be independent, separate and strong.

Homesickness isn't a 24-hour a day affliction. It comes in temporary waves at odd moments of the day. Most homesick children have fun most of the time. Their fellow campers and counselors see their whole range of feelings and behavior – the parents hear only the miserable moments in the most recent letter. It's important to remember that these moments do not make a summer. Acknowledging the very real feelings that are being felt at the moment and sharing your perspective can help – you might remind your child that she/he only feels miserable some of the time, and refer to the coping strategies they practiced before coming to camp.

The best thing a parent can say is "Honey, I know you're feeling homesick. It's normal to have those feelings. I want you to make the adjustment, and I feel confident that you can and that you will. I want to help you in any way I can to settle in. I don't expect you to be happy all the time, or to stop missing us and missing home. But I do expect you to stay there, and deal with the feelings you have." Once the option of going home is closed, the work of adjusting to being at camp can begin. Most cases of homesickness fade away by the third or fourth day, if treated with a little attention and recognition. We try to help the camper to make a place for him/herself within the camp community. Tough cases require a triple dose of effort, involving cooperation between parents, the camper, and staff.

Common Pitfalls

The worst thing a parent can say is "Darling, I know you're going to love it eventually. Just try it a few more days (or a week, or two weeks, or whatever) and if you still feel homesick, I'll come and get you." This approach doesn't work because it puts the camper in the position of being right (I knew I wouldn't like it, come and get me) or of being wrong (I was wrong about not liking it, I want to stay). Nobody likes being wrong or backing down.

With the "try it for one more day" approach, we find campers typically stay exactly one day longer and then demand their parents make good on their promise. When they do, the loss is many-fold: the camper has uncertainties about their capacity to handle independence, and has lost out on a great learning experience from which they had begun to gain many new skills and friends. Next, they have a boring week at home with no friends and no planned activities. It may be a long time before they'll feel ready to break away.

There is a loss at camp, too. The amount of energy that staff and campers put into helping a homesick camper creates close ties. That invested energy pays off in great emotional involvement when homesickness is overcome. We hate to see campers leave camp early, and we miss them when they go. Parents also lose in the disappointment of seeing their child miss out on an experience that they could have learned to handle, and in the last-minute change in plans that means parents have to provide alternative activities.

Another common mistake is to “bribe” a child into staying at camp. Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object or other experience sends a message that camp is worth it just for a material object. The reward should be your child’s newfound confidence and independence.

Tips for (parents) coping with child’s homesickness at camp:

- ✓ Don’t feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is a first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth and development.

- ✓ If your child sends letters saying “I hate camp. I cried last night. I can’t sleep at night,” DON’T PANIC. Send reassuring, supportive letters and talk candidly with the camp director to obtain his/her perspective on your child’s adjustment.

- ✓ Trust your instincts. Most incidents of homesickness will pass in a day or two. Research shows only seven percent of the cases are truly severe. If your child is not eating or sleeping because of anxiety or depression, we will recommend they return home. If their stay at camp is cut short, focus on the positive and encourage your child to try camp again next year.

- ✓ If all efforts fail, your child may go home. We will never make them feel guilty about it, and we hope you’ll support us in that. Say, “I’m proud you stayed as long as you did”. When a child says “Never again,” while you’re hugging him/her quietly say “Never is a long time. Perhaps, one day you will tell me that you are ready to go to camp.”

