

2026 Camp Handbook



SUMMER

PO Box 369

Beach Lake, Pennsylvania 18405

Tel (570) 729-1010

WINTER

1714 Wantagh Avenue

Wantagh, New York 11793

Tel (516) 221-8800

2026 Dates & Tuition

Zoom Meet-Ups & Camper/Family Connections

Zoom-Meet-Ups are for enrolled Chestnut Lake campers (by gender/grade groups) and will be announced throughout the year. For other camper-to-camper or parent-to-parent connections, please contact Shara Crane, Engagement & Arts Director.

Winter Reunion

January 11, 2026 | 11 AM to 1 PM (South Bowl in Philadelphia, PA)

Spring Fling/New Parent Workshop

June 7, 2026 | 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Visiting Day

July 25, 2026 (For Full Summer campers)

Intersession

July 25-27, 2026 (For Full Summer campers)

Discovery Camp (5-Day) Program

July 27-31, 2026

2026 SEASON	DATES	TUITION
First Session (3rd – 8th)	Sunday, June 28 – Saturday, July 25	\$8,600
Second Session (3rd – 8th)	Monday, July 27 – Friday, August 16	\$7,100
Full Summer (3rd – 8th)	Sunday, June 28 – Friday, August 16 *	\$13,475
Varsity, LT & JC Teen Programs (9th – 12th)	(9 th – <u>Learn more about these programs</u>	
Discovery Camp (2nd – 4th)	<u>Learn more about this special 5-day program</u> Monday, July 27 – 31 for FIRST TIME CAMPERS	

* Full Summer campers will have an "Intersession" period July 25-27, 2026.

Dates & Tuition for the 2027 season will be presented during the summer (usually by the first week of July).

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Chestnut Lake Camp



Chestnut Lake Camp was created to give every camper a place where they can feel confident, supported, and proud of who they are. At the heart of that experience is a team of talented and caring staff members who work tirelessly to **Bring It Out** in each camper's character, leadership, and confidence.

Our story begins next door, at **Trail's End Camp**, whose legacy stretches back more than 80 years. Over generations, Trail's End became one of the most respected camps in the country—a 7-week experience known for its outstanding programs, exceptional facilities, and meaningful traditions.

In 2007, Trail's End owners **Starr and Stan Goldberg** and **Rona and Marc Honigfeld** imagined something new: a camp that offered the same quality, spirit, and sense of belonging, but in a shorter session format for modern families. They acquired 200 acres of neighboring land—once home to another camp—and began to transform it. Within a year, **Chestnut Lake Camp** was born.

From the start, Chestnut Lake grew quickly. Families were drawn to its warm culture, world-class programs, and flexible sessions—now offered as 4-week, 3-week, and 7-week options. In just a decade, camp capacity doubled, and by the summer of 2025, more than **650 campers** will share the Chestnut Lake experience across the summer.

Founding directors **Paul and Debbi Schorey** guided Chestnut Lake through its early years, establishing the core traditions and values that still define camp today. After 2019, as they moved on to new adventures, the Goldberg and Honigfeld families searched for the right leaders to guide CLC into its next chapter—and found them in **Aaron and Ann Selkow**.

Since arriving as Owners/Directors in 2020, Aaron and Ann have led Chestnut Lake into a new era of growth, community, and purpose. Today, CLC continues to thrive as a place where campers form lifelong friendships, discover their best selves, and carry the spirit of camp all year long.

Bring It Out!

“Bringing Out the Best in Me” is a special saying at Chestnut Lake. The message conveys our commitment to camp being a place for campers and staff to find their best and truest versions of themselves, and to allow their character, leadership, and confidence to develop and shine.

- Bring Out **strong and positive bonds between campers and protect and care for their well-being** so that they can be free to enjoy every aspect of their summer.
- Bring Out the **qualities in our staff to be excellent role models, to be engaged, to take initiative, and to care genuinely about Chestnut Lake and its campers.**
- Bring Out **experiences and programs that are fantastically fun and filled with opportunities for growth while offering an aspirational arc** to the summer and a camper’s lifetime at Chestnut Lake.
- Bring Out a place that **celebrates everyone’s unique character while giving them the chance to become the best and truest version of themselves.**
- Bring Out a place that **inspires spirit through rituals and traditions that bring people together and unite the community no matter their backgrounds and unique qualities.**
- Bring Out the **development of grit and resilience in campers and staff** through growth opportunities and new experiences.
- Bring Out a **reputation for excellence** so that campers, staff, parents, and alumni will always revere being part of the Chestnut Lake family.

Our CLC Family

For introductions to the year-round Chestnut Lake Camp leadership team, please [click here](#) (or visit the “Our Family” section of the Chestnut website).

A Letter from Aaron & Ann



When we first discovered Chestnut Lake Camp back in early 2020, we were at a turning point. After decades of working in camping and youth development — and with our own child, Lily, growing up — we were ready for a new chapter, one that would combine our passion for helping young people thrive with the kind of community we wanted to call home. From the moment we stepped onto these beautiful grounds in Beach Lake, Pennsylvania, we knew Chestnut Lake was that place.

Since then, we've poured ourselves into this camp with full hearts — learning, growing, and working alongside an extraordinary team of staff and families. The past few years have brought challenges, growth, and incredible moments of joy. What's remained constant is what makes this community truly special: its resilience, kindness, spirit, and deep sense of connection. Every summer, we watch campers uncover new strengths, form friendships that last well beyond the summer, and experience the kind of joy that only happens at camp.

The 2025 season was our most remarkable yet — with record enrollment, expanded programs, new facilities, and more returning campers and staff than ever before. Now, as we look ahead to the 2026 camp season, the excitement is already building. We can feel it in every conversation with a Chestnut parent providing encouragement and great feedback, each time we meet (or re-meet) amazing staff members who will join us in June, each time we tour our beautiful (and developing) site, and every conversation with the passionate people who make Chestnut Lake come alive.

This camp has become part of our family's story, and we're endlessly grateful that it's part of yours, too. Thank you for trusting us with your children, for sharing in the traditions and magic of camp, and for helping to make Chestnut Lake a place where everyone can grow, belong, and truly bring out their best selves.

Here's to another unforgettable summer — together.

Aaron & Ann Selkow
Owners/Directors

Contact & Communication Info



SUMMER

Typically, we open the summer office by June 10th

PO Box 369
Beach Lake, PA 18405

Tel. **(570) 729-1010**
Fax (516) 300-1633

OFF-SEASON

Typically, we close the off-season office by June 10th

1714 Wantagh Avenue
Wantagh, NY 11793

Tel. **(516) 221-8800**
Fax (516) 300-1633

TOLL-FREE PHONE

(866) 621-CAMP (2267)

YEAR-ROUND

info@chestnutlakecamp.com

ChestnutLakeCamp.com

QUESTIONS?

Billing, Forms & Enrollment.....	Ann Selkow (570-729-1010 in summer ann@chestnutlakecamp.com)
Camper Concerns.....	<i>Information will be provided prior to the start of the camp session, but you can always contact the Main Office or Directors</i>
Baggage/Arrival/Departure	Caryn Labkovski (570-729-1010 in summer caryn@chestnutlakecamp.com)
Transportation.....	Alex Ward (570-729-1010 in summer alex@chestnutlakecamp.com)
Online Photos/Video.....	Communications Team (communications@chestnutlakecamp.com)
Emergencies	Main Office or Aaron Selkow (570-729-1010 in summer aaron@chestnutlakecamp.com)
General Questions.....	Office Team (570-729-1010 in summer info@chestnutlakecamp.com)

Office Team (Summer)

The team that staffs the Main Office at camp appreciates the importance of always providing our families with the best and most efficient service and will quickly and effectively respond to your concerns. **Please understand that the office is an extremely busy place, and that hundreds of calls are coming in every day. We appreciate your patience and understanding and thank you for abiding by our office hours and outreach guidance.**

Main Office Hours (Summer) & Phone Systems

We request that non-emergency calls be made between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM (on Saturday, our office opens one hour later), while our office staff is monitoring the phones. If your call is not answered, you will be provided with a variety of choices through an auto attendant and our goal is to return the call as promptly as possible. This will often be within hours, and at most, within one day of when it was received.

	<u>Office Hours</u>	<u>After Hours Support</u>	<u>Number to Use</u>
Sunday – Friday	9:00 AM – 9:00 PM	24 hours/day	(570) 729-1010 (or 866-221-CAMP)
Saturday	9:00 AM – 9:00 PM	24 Hours/day	(570) 729-1010 (or 866-221-CAMP)

Please remember that campers will not have access to phones during their stay at camp except for the scheduled calls that are set up through our camp administration (more information on that process follows later in the Handbook), nor will counselors be permitted to phone parents concerning their children. All communication will need to go through our prescribed contacts that will be provided prior to the start of the camp session (this usually includes a mix of Assistant Directors, Directors, Wellness Coaches, and/or Division Leaders).

Mailing Information

All correspondence should be sent as follows:

<i>Mail for Campers:</i> [Camper's Name] – [Division] Chestnut Lake Camp PO Box 369 Beach Lake, PA 18405	<i>Mail for Staff:</i> [Staff Person's Name] Chestnut Lake Camp PO Box 369 Beach Lake, PA 18405	<i>Package/Parcel for Campers/Staff (WITH APPROVAL ONLY)</i> [Camper's Name] – [Division] or [Staff Name] Chestnut Lake Camp 326 Trail's End Road Beach Lake, PA 18405

“No Package” Policy

To model our core values, we have a **NO PACKAGE POLICY** at Chestnut Lake. This means that unless there is explicit and specific permission from a Chestnut Lake staff member for a parent to send a package to our attention for their child, there will be **NO** packages accepted at camp. Please visit **Appendix F | Package Policy** for full details about the policy. Please note, campers celebrating a birthday while at camp can receive one package (see “Birthday” section).

Email Information

Parents/guardians may send emails to campers through the camp’s web service ([MyCLC](#)). Logging in to MyCLC requires a secured username and password, which is the same login information that you used for camper enrollment and for completing/submitting all forms. Please keep in mind that while email happens instantaneously for us in the outside world, it is not so at camp. Emails from parents to campers sent through MyCLC get passed out once a day with the regular mail (usually, messages received before 11 AM will be distributed on each day).

Parent/Family Travel

If parent(s)/families will be traveling away from home at any time during a camper’s stay at Chestnut Lake, it is imperative that updated information is provided to us in the event of an emergency. Please email info@chestnutlakecamp.com with the relevant information (including dates of travel, contact numbers, and location) in advance of your trip.

Driving Directions

Our camp is easily accessible by car, but we do recommend planning any trips to camp in advance due to variable traffic and road conditions (especially in the Pocono Mountain area). If you use a GPS for directions, please input “326 T516, Beach Lake, PA 18405” or “Chestnut Lake Camp”. This should give you the most accurate GPS directions. Detailed directions to camp [may be found on our website](#).

Everything from A to Z



Accreditation

Chestnut Lake has earned Accredited Camp status from the American Camp Association (ACA). The ACA program requires a close review of every facet of the camp operation, including staffing, facility, program, medical, emergency, food service and other standards. There is a full on-site inspection conducted every three years, and ongoing training on any issues developing within the region. Chestnut Lake has been accredited for many years and has chosen to be a supporter of the ACA and its work throughout the camping field. Our last accreditation renewal was in 2025 – we received a score of 100%.

Activities

At Chestnut Lake, **we offer a balance between group-centered activities that are pre-assigned by bunk or Division and elective activities where campers request their top choices.** This allows our campers to experience all that camp has to offer while building and strengthening the bunk/Division experience and encouraging individual growth and development. More information about each type of activity is below.

Arts and Sports Activities

Campers participate in group-centered and elective-based activities in sports and in the arts with other campers in their Division (gender/age group) and sometimes with campers that may be in different groups. Campers will have a chance to choose electives throughout each session. Throughout each rotation, campers will have a chance to learn and develop skills in that art/sport whether they are beginners or well-versed in that activity. Sometimes these electives are offered for daily experiences that change often, and other times we give campers “3-Day Electives” to get a longer and deeper experience in that program.

Outdoor Adventure Activities

Throughout the session, campers will have the chance to test their limits and develop both individual and team skills on our High Challenge Course, Low Ropes elements, and Ee Course (Ninja Warrior-style program). This includes a climbing wall, zipline, flying squirrel, and many other awesome options. Outdoor Adventure – which will be experienced in campers’ groups and for some elective programs, also includes archery, mountain biking, nature/science programs, camping, and more.

Waterfront Activities

Chestnut Lake features an exceptional waterfront program, based on our expansive private lake and heated, salt-water, swimming pool. Although instructional swimming periods are not part of the program, we make sure that campers are capable swimmers at the start of each session before allowing them to enjoy the lake and pool activities. The pool is a “play” area, with lots of ways to enjoy time in and around the pool for fun with friends, all day and night (we have lights for nighttime swims as well). The lake has a beautiful beachfront with a massive Aqua Park (inflatable equipment area), non-motorized boating (like sail boats, paddle boats, canoes, sit-on-top kayaks, paddleboards and more), and motorized boating activities (such as water skiing, tubing, wakeboarding, and banana boat rides). We also feature beach activities and fishing at the lake. When campers go to the lake, they are required to wear life vests for ALL activities, regardless of their swimming

skills. Our goal is to have each camper at one of the Waterfront areas at least once daily, with approximately 5 days of the week spent at the lake, specifically.

Evening Programs & Special Activities

The campers will enjoy a wide variety of other small group, large group and all-camp programs throughout their session at camp. Most nights of the session, campers will participate in an evening program with their Division run by staff members working in that Division. Other nights, they may engage in bunk activities or all-camp activities. Campers will also experience special events during the day such as Carnivals, Tribal (Color War), and a wide range of camp traditions and special surprises.

Arrival and Departure

Families in DC/MD, PA, NJ, NY and other nearby areas in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions are provided with bus transportation options prior to the summer, and bus costs are included in our tuition. More than 90% of our families take advantage of the bus options each year. Florida families are afforded an opportunity to purchase tickets for camper travel to and from camp in a group plan with our own staff as chaperones. If arrangements are needed for families traveling by airplane other than from FL, please contact the camp office so that we can consider the best options and try to assist with travel to and from airports. We are very happy to assist in these accommodations whenever possible.

Families using the FL flight options (or those with campers travelling to camp from overseas) will usually be asked to travel one day before the start of the camp session. This gives our travelers a little time to accommodate any travel delays, and to settle at camp before the start of the session and the arrival of all bus travelers. Departure will happen for everyone on the same end date at camp.

Athletic and Other Equipment

All campers are guaranteed a high-quality sports, arts, and other programmatic area experience at camp. We supply appropriate equipment for use by all ages of campers. No campers have to bring anything that is not explicitly listed on the Packing List. However, we are open to a few things that can be sent from home (if you would like):

- Baseball/softball glove and cleats, if they play
- Tennis racquet, if they play
- Lacrosse Stick and lacrosse gear, if they play
- Soccer shin guards and cleats, if they play
- If they are a hockey player that wants to have their own stick and basic equipment, it can be brought (in a bag that will be stored at the Hockey Arena)
- Guitar or another small instrument, if they like to play and practice on their own (if it can be stored safely)
- Fishing rod and reel, if they like to fish

Baggage/Luggage

[PLEASE REVIEW THE NEW “CAMP BAGGAGE GUIDE” AVAILABLE IN THE “FORMS & DOCUMENTS” SECTION OF MyCLC]

As you review the **2026 Packing List** (you can [click here](#), or access from your MyCLC), you may feel a little bit overwhelmed (enjoy our **“Packing Pointers”** in your MyCLC portal). **We can assure you that the list of items recommended or required by camp has been curated with thoughtful consideration for the schedule, pace, environment, and activities at camp, as well as our effort to be as efficient and reasonable as possible.**

Getting the supplies that your child will need for camp is an important step, and while we allow a family to choose the type of bags or luggage that is best for them, **we do require that the baggage/luggage comes to camp prior to the camper’s arrival. This is a very important, mandatory, part of the process as it lends itself to the acclimation of each camper into the camp environment each year.** We will send notification by the late spring as to the requirement for each Session in terms of baggage arrival, but it tends to be multiple days (2-7) prior to the camper’s arrival at camp. Bags are almost always shipped, though dropping off bags can be an option that must be pre-arranged with our camp office. Please consult the new “Camp Baggage Guide” for our recommendations on baggage services and methods for delivery and return shipment, and you will also find a new “Baggage Plan” form to complete for **EVERY** camper in your MyCLC section of camper forms.

The arrival of baggage in advance allows our counselors to unpack and organize every camper's supplies, and to make their beds for them before they even get off the bus or arrive otherwise at Chestnut Lake. This helps for a smooth start to the session, as we value this opportunity to shift the focus on a camper's arrival from unpacking to connecting with others.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah Tutoring

For families with a child who will celebrate their Bar or Bat Mitzvah in August, September, or October of this year, we are happy to assist with periodic tutoring throughout the session. Tutoring can be simply coordinating time to connect campers to a tutor at home each week. To discuss, please be in touch with our office.

Birthdays

Celebrating a birthday at camp is very special! Every child celebrating a birthday at camp will receive recognition and attention. The birthday child will receive a special birthday shirt (or another item, if this is not the first time with a Chestnut birthday) to wear throughout the day, and they will have a great pizza party (with birthday cake) for their cabin.

A very brief call between a camper celebrating a birthday and a parent can be arranged. To set this up, please reach out to our Wellness Coaches (wellness@chestnutlakecamp.com) and they will set up a scheduled time for the call. If possible, please consider whether a regularly scheduled camper/parent call can be used for the birthday call as well. Families may send a package for their child's birthday if it will be celebrated while they are at camp. If you send a birthday package to your child, please put "Birthday Package" on the label or box very clearly so we can make sure it gets to your child on their birthday.

Bullying or Challenging Social Behavior

All campers at Chestnut Lake are expected to live by the values of our camp while they are present in Beach Lake with us. These expectations (**detailed in Appendix D | Behavior at Camp**) will be shared and discussed with campers, and we will reinforce them throughout the summer. We do expect that challenges will arise – it is an understandable outcome of living in such an intensive environment with many others, and part of the process of growth and development for children that helps them to build resilience and social skills.

While there will be various issues that campers will have to navigate this summer (with help from their counselors and our other staff), we recognize that bullying continues to be a primary concern that children may deal with at school, on teams, and in other social situations with peers. Children will engage in behavior at times that causes others to feel excluded, uncomfortable, and even threatened. This behavior may, at times, be intentional.

We want all families to understand that at Chestnut Lake, bullying (whether in the form of emotional or physical actions against others) is not acceptable. We prescribe to a zero-tolerance policy that requires us to address bullying concerns seriously and swiftly, and to act when bullying is taking place. At times, the result of bullying at camp will be thoughtful mediation and problem-solving with an adult with careful follow-up. **The key will be our ability to notice behavior and to establish an open and trusting relationship between campers and between campers and staff members.** That will often prevent any concern about this type of behavior to be easily resolved. If necessary, families will be contacted to discuss a more serious issue. If the situation has major impact on other members of the community, campers may be dismissed from camp.

If you are aware of bullying at camp from previous years, suspect a situation that could arise for any reason, or if you have specific concerns, we strongly encourage you to raise these issues with our directors. We are committed to maintaining a healthy and positive community and will do our very best to protect each child in our care.

Cabin Placements/Requests

We take several factors into consideration when making cabin placements, including the camper's grade, home community, years at camp, personality, previous cabin assignment, length of stay, parent suggestions/requests, and other relevant issues. We spend quite a bit of time grouping the campers and consider the best interests of the campers and of camp throughout the process. While we cannot guarantee that all the suggestions will be met (and guarantees are only provided on a person-by-person basis and in direct communication with our directors), we do our best to create bunks that have every camper's interest in mind.

Any special requests for cabin placement must be made on the online Bunk Request Form that is available in your MyCLC account. **Please note that the only requests that will be considered are those listed on this form.** You will have the opportunity to provide a few requests. We recommend that parents/guardians discuss these requests with campers before they are submitted. All requests will be reviewed and considered seriously, but our camp directors make the final determination on all placements. Campers will learn their cabin assignment when they arrive at camp. Please note that our campers in Varsity (rising 9th and 10th-graders) and Leadership Training (rising 11th graders) may also submit requests for room assignments in their housing.

Camper/Parent Phone Calls

We recognize that all families want to feel connected to their children during the summer, even when they are away at camp. **While phone calls between parents and campers are the most personal means of communication, we provide a variety of options to help our families feel like they're in touch throughout the camp session.**

These are important things that you must pay particular attention to with parent/camper calls:

- **First Session campers will call home two (2) times per session with each call lasting approximately 8-10 minutes. There can be an additional call on a camper's birthday (unless it's best to combine a birthday call with a standard scheduled call). Second Session campers will call home one (1) time per session, with the additional allowance of a birthday call. Full Summer campers will have three (3) calls, in addition to seeing families on Visiting Day. If a camper is not being visited by family on Visiting Day, we will arrange a Visiting Day call (or Zoom/FaceTime call) as a substitute.**
- **In 2026, we are making a change to our phone call scheduling system to be easier for families and less disruptive (and more successful) for our campers.** This system will have Divisions scheduled for specific dates/times and parents will simply need to be available during those call window times to receive their child's call. More details on this system will follow.
- As we have done in the past, **there will be no calls during the first week of the session.** We have found that this practice helps our campers adjust to camp life. In the First Session, the second call will be scheduled approximately one week later than the first. In addition to the camper/parent call, **the parents of all first-time campers will receive a call from a Assistant Director, Division Leader and/or Wellness Coach within the first 72 hours of the session.**
- We will send special guidance to families with regards to camper/parent calls in advance. **We stress that calls are both a wonderful opportunity for campers and parent to connect, and sometimes challenging, too.** Campers may leave a call with renewed or new feelings of missing home, parents may finish calls feeling that there are concerns that have been raised, and as with any communication between parents and children, there can be gaps or questions that are unanswered. Please try to lower your expectations for these calls and treat them as a chance to share love and support (above all else). Too many questions, probing deeply into concerns, or a lack of enthusiasm can cause challenges. Please reach out to our directors and staff members to discuss how campers are doing while at camp – we have insight and resources that far exceeds what our campers or parents at home may have.
- A camper/parent call is not mandatory. If you, as a parent (in discussions with our camp leaders) feel that eliminating or rescheduling a call may be better for your child, we're open to that. Calls can certainly be hard for some campers at times, due to specific circumstances or challenges. We are happy to talk more personally about your feelings with regards to calls.
- Your child will be calling you directly and you will be able to indicate the phone number that your child should call (home, cell, work, etc.).

Camper/Parent Post-Summer Survey

At the conclusion of the camp session, you will receive an electronic evaluation to complete. **We ask for you to provide feedback and insights on the summer so that we can ensure another fabulous Chestnut Lake experience for your family and others in the future.** We also use various evaluator tools throughout the summer with our campers to assess their experience at camp, including (but not limited to) the food service program, activities, and other elements of the summer.

Camp Divisions, Campuses, and Leaders

Chestnut Lake divides its campers into gender/grade groups called, "Divisions." These Divisions are in one of three residential housing areas on the property: Boys Campus (3rd through 8th-grade boys), Girls Campus (3rd through 8th-grade girls), or Varsity Campus (9th and 10th-grade boys and girls in Varsity, and 11th-graders in Leadership Training). There are usually 8-14 campers in a Boys/Girls Campus cabin, and there are usually two cabins per Division. In Varsity/LT, campers live in buildings by gender with dormitory-style housing. The camper Divisions are as follows:

Boys Campus

- Ciqala (rising 3rd & 4th-graders)
- Mato (rising 5th-graders)
- Watola (rising 6th-graders)
- Takoda (rising 7th-graders)
- Sani (rising 8th-graders)

Girls Campus

- Yazhi (rising 3rd & 4th-graders)
- Nova (rising 5th-graders)
- Niabi (rising 6th-graders)
- Wakanda (rising 7th-graders)
- Kaya (rising 8th-graders)

Varsity Campus

- Varsity 1 (rising 9th-graders)
- Varsity 2 (rising 10th-graders)
- Leadership Training (“LT”) (rising 11th-graders)

Assistant Directors (Campus ADs) oversee the campuses, and Division Leaders (DLs) are supervised by them. The Division Leaders oversee one Division each summer. On Varsity Campus, we have Division Leaders as well. Sometimes, we also have Campus Division Leaders or other position, too. Wellness Coaches are also assigned to Campuses and support the Assistant Directors.

Camper Information & Other Important Forms

It is required that you complete all online forms so that we may best serve your child during the camp season. These forms are kept confidential and are only shared by the camp directors if necessary or when the information included is critical to provide to other staff to ensure the best care of the campers. We encourage you to provide any insight that would be helpful to us, including family situation, medical concerns, etc., which will help us to ensure your child a positive and successful camp experience. **Unless forms are received by the date requested, we cannot guarantee that we will have ample time to review the important information shared. To access all forms, please visit [MyCLC](#). Forms for campers or families are updated there throughout the year.**

Cancellations

Prior to January 1st, cancellations can be made without any financial penalty and full refunds will be provided. Cancellations should be made upon written request to Ann Selkow at ann@chestnutlakecamp.com. After December 31st, refunds are not provided for cancellations (please contact our directors with any questions or special requests).

Community Campfire & Community Service Awards

In keeping with Chestnut Lake’s values, we have a long-standing program where the entire camp (campers and staff) come together one evening each week to recognize each other, as well as celebrate the week at camp. The Campfire includes songs, recaps, highlight videos, and the nomination and presentation of our Community Service Awards (see **Appendix I**). The CSA is the most coveted and honored recognition of campers and staff by their peers.

Crisis Response & Security

Our job as directors and camp leaders is to make the health and well-being of the campers our highest priority. Our year-round and summer staff spends considerable time developing protocol to maintain the safety of our camp community and creating effective planning for responding to any type of crisis. We expend a great deal of energy and resources on the selection of qualified and – when appropriate – fully-credentialed staff, the use of sophisticated systems, the design of detailed processes and strict standards (in coordination with organizations such as the Department of Health, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, American Camp Association, and others), and extensive training. As a practice, we do not publish our means of responding to crisis and securing our community and facility. For more information, please contact Aaron Selkow at aaron@chestnutlakecamp.com.

Discovery Camp

Our Discovery Camp program is a 5-day program for FIRST TIME rising 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-grade boys and girls during the first five days of our Second Session. Campers in this program can attend only once. The program will have a unique beginning, middle, and end and it is designed to give campers a true sense of what camp will be like in a future summer. **Our Discovery Camp families will be given a separate handbook to guide their preparation and experience.** While many of the resources in this handbook will be relevant to them, there are several differences that we will more specifically articulate. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact our directors.

Dress Code

We ask each camper at Chestnut Lake to dress in a way that reflects respect for our camp's values and ourselves, and that is safe and appropriate for the activity a camper is participating in. We suggest that parents and campers discuss levels of appropriateness before arriving at camp and use their best judgment to pack clothing that is ideal for the camp setting – remember that Chestnut Lake is a place where we play in the dirt, get wet, and sweat a lot! As you prepare for camp, we ask you to consider these insights:

- Chestnut Lake permits one-piece bathing suits and two-piece bathing suits like “tankinis” for campers.
- T-Shirts or other clothing with inappropriate wording or graphics are not permitted.
- Clothing that allows underwear and/or bras to be visible should not be brought to camp.
- All items on the Packing List with the “Everything Camper” link should come to camp – no other branded gear is required.
- Clothing intended to be worn as a costume that objectifies campers themselves or others, including other cultures, should not be brought to camp.

Chestnut Lake reserves the right to ask any participant to change their clothing at any time if it doesn't meet camp's values and/or is inappropriate or unsafe for a given activity.

Electronics/Screen-Free Policy

To demonstrate our commitment to providing a summer camp experience that emphasizes building community and enhancing relationships and focuses on people and places and not screen time, we have created an electronics (“Screen-Free”) policy that is detailed in this Handbook. **Please note that any device prohibited and any device with the ability to connect to the internet (even if you've disabled Wi-Fi) will be collected and stored by our camp's staff for the duration of a camper's session or sent home.** The following electronics are **not allowed** at camp:

- MP3 Players/Mobile Devices with Touch Screens, Video Playing Capacity, or Games
- Electronic Handheld Game Devices (Gameboys, PSPs, Nintendo DSs, etc.)
- Cell Phones (with or without a SIM card, even for use as a camera)
- Laptops, Netbooks, or other computers
- iPads and/or Tablets
- DVD Players
- E-Readers
- Smart Watches

Please see Appendix E | Electronics (Screen-Free) Policy for the full information and the values behind it.

Everything Camper & Camp Gear

We work in partnership with a popular camp apparel company, [Everything Camper](#). There are minimal “uniform”-type requirements at Chestnut Lake – we mostly allow campers to wear what they like throughout the summer, except for special programs and activities, and inter-camp sports, for example – and these are all available through Everything Camper. Families are also welcomed to order additional items through Everything Camper or other providers of camp gear, but nothing is required except for the 4 t-shirts, 1 mesh pinnie (this can replace one of the 4 t-shirts and was a new required item as of 2025), 1 sweatshirt, and 2 pairs of shorts at Everything Camper (and the shorts can just be green and white, as indicated, and not branded with “Chestnut Lake”).

At camp, we will also provide campers with Chestnut Lake gear. This may include a Division t-shirt, special t-shirts for events, longevity gifts for a camper's first, third, fifth, and other multiple-year experiences, Banquet gifts, and other special items. Division t-shirts will be provided in the sizes indicated on the camper's application (completed by parents).

Food Service

The summer of 2026 continues our focus on the provision of healthy, well-balanced, diverse, and appropriate foods for our campers and staff throughout the summer. Working with experienced food service staff and the support of nutritionists and experts in the field, we are excited to continue to offer menus and meals this summer that are both nutritious and delicious.

All food served at Chestnut Lake is prepared and served in a "Nut Free" environment, with very high sensitivity to sesame (practically sesame-free). This means that we do not allow any nuts or nut products to be used or distributed in camp for any meals or snacks, including at Canteen. We also make sure that any trips off-site follow the same guidelines. Our cooks prepare meals that are nutritious, plentiful, and offer variety regardless of these restrictions.

Many of our campers and staff have their own dietary needs and may have food allergies, so we substitute acceptable items whenever needed. **There are always alternative meals for those with allergies or legitimate restrictions (i.e., gluten free, celiac, food allergies, vegetarian, etc.), and our Specialty Foods Coordinator works with our staff on site to help ensure the delivery of these specific meals and items throughout the session.** Intake conversations with families to discuss their child's needs (when they have unique and important dietary restrictions or food allergies) are scheduled and held by members of our year-round team.

Salad bars, buffet (hot and cold) stations, and fresh fruit are available for campers each day, and those with very particular needs will be accommodated whenever possible. We plan meals that have an abundance of fresh items, but we also understand that traditional camp favorites and kid-friendly foods are a key. Anyone with specific concerns about their child's food needs must include all relevant information on their medical and/or Camper Info forms, and you can be in touch with us at specialtyfoods@chestnutlakecamp.com.

Graffiti/Damage to Camp Property

At camp, it's important that we respect both the people in our community as well as the physical space that we live and learn in. **Graffiti and other damage to camp property is not permitted in any space at camp. If any camper or staff member is found to have graffitied or damaged a space, they or their family will be fined.** Please discuss this with your child in advance of the summer to encourage them to be respectful within and outside of their living spaces.

Head Lice/Health Screening

Head lice infestation continues to be a problem at schools, communities and camps all over the country. Therefore, **Chestnut Lake will be taking the following precautions to attempt to minimize the risk of lice among our campers, teens, and staff:**

- 1. All campers and staff will be checked for lice upon arrival and may also be checked periodically throughout the session.**
- 2. If a child is found to have head lice, we will proceed with treatment at camp. Any costs for treatment carried out at camp will be applied to a camper's account. This charge will cover the treatment on the day of detection as well as retreatments throughout the remaining days of the session as needed.**
- 3. If head lice are detected during the session, individuals will immediately be instructed not to share belongings, and Chestnut Lake's standard response plan will be put in motion. All cabin residents will be checked and will be treated as needed (families will be informed if their child is found to have head lice at any time). Treatment costs for head lice that is detected during the session will be covered by camp.**

On the first day of each session and periodically throughout the session, all campers will have a general Wellness check. This is a critical opportunity for us to make sure that campers are not entering or living at camp with any lingering health concerns that might affect them or others that they will be living with. Please help us by sharing any last-minute concerns that might have come up. If any campers are found to have exceptional health concerns as noted by our Medical Team, we may ask families to remove the camper until such time that they have fully recovered and have received written clearance from a physician. Periodic wellness checks will be scheduled as needed throughout the the summer.

Health Center & Medications

No aspect of the camp experience is more vital than the health and well-being of the campers at Chestnut Lake. Therefore, we take great care in selecting and training our staff, and in organizing the Health Center. Under the leadership of our Head Nurse, and with the support of our nurses and physicians (we always have one doctor on-site), the Health Center will be staffed by qualified professionals who understand the needs of our camp's program and that of the campers, teens, and staff in their care. Nurses and Physicians are screened and go through a strict hiring process. Our doctors tend to be specialists in pediatrics, emergency care, or other relevant fields. We generally have 4-8 nurses and one physician living on-site who provide round-the-clock supervision in our modern, air-conditioned Health Center.

In terms of communication, we ensure that information is shared quickly with families, and from families. Sometimes, our nurses and physicians will communicate directly with parents. But often, our Head Nurse, Nurses, and/or Assistant will be the primary point of contact (you can contact the Health Center via email at medical@chestnutlakecamp.com). We are only twenty minutes from nearby hospitals and if your child needs outside medical attention or is spending the night in the Health Center for any reason, our staff will contact you in a timely manner. We use great caution regarding your child's health and well-being and will be happy to respond to all your questions regarding your child while at camp. Prior to the arrival of campers at camp, our Medical Team will review all forms. We will be in touch with families if there are questions or if we feel there is a need to meet to further discuss accommodations for your child. Prior to that outreach, please be in touch with our camp directors with questions or concerns.

As a means of standardizing our communication, you will be contacted if:

- Your child needs to be transported from camp for a medical reason;
- Your child is staying overnight in the Health Center;
- Your child is seen by the camp physician and there is any atypical concern, or;
- There are any special arrangements made in advance.

In terms of standard distribution of medication to campers and staff, we will be using a medication packaging company (CampMeds) again this summer to assist with the pre-packaging of prescription medications prior to camper arrival. More information will be shared prior to the summer. We require that all campers' medication be pre-packaged before coming to camp. This applies to the following types of medicines:

- Any **daily** medication including Over the Counter (OTC) medications in **PILL FORM**
- Prescription medicines that you are sending to camp to be used "as needed"

Please note:

- *The policy applies to pills only.* You must send all liquid medicines, inhalers and drops directly to us at our summer address 10 days prior to the start of camp. There is a special "Medication Intake Form" available on MyCLC to use when packaging and sending these to us at the Beach Lake, PA address.
- Medications that are in pill form will be individually packaged and sealed according to date and time of administration. If your child takes more than one pill at the same time these pills will be conveniently packaged together. This method of dispensing medication during summer camp will minimize potential medication errors, ensuring that every camper gets the correct medication and dosage, at the right time, on the right day. It also allows more time for our nurses to devote to your child's other healthcare needs.
- Except for asthma inhalers and limited other items (which must be cleared with our Medical Team), we require that all medications be kept and distributed by the Health Center. Mealtime medications will be distributed by our medical staff for your child's convenience, and we can distribute medications at other specific times throughout the day as needed.
- We strongly advise parents/guardians against removing a child from their regular medication regimen while at camp. These "medication vacations" can create an overly challenging environment for your child.
- We encourage parents to consider whether non-essential medications – such as chewable vitamins – are truly needed during the weeks that a camper will be on site at camp. As of 2022, we have adjusted our policies slightly to allow some of these less essential (and non-dangerous) medications such as vitamins or Melatonin to be kept on Campus by Assistant Directors/Division Leaders in the Campus Office and distributed on site in the evening by leadership staff. These types of medications must receive approval from our team in advance of the summer.
- You will find a new form ("Medication Policy") in your MyCLC account that must be completed for every camper, whether they already take prescription medication regularly.

- Remember, **NO MEDICATIONS** will be accepted upon arrival of the campers without explicit permission by Ann Selkow or a member of the Medical Team.

Health Forms

No camper will be permitted in camp without completed medical forms. Your child should receive a physical examination within 12 months of camp. It should indicate on the forms whether your child should receive any special medical attention or medication while at camp. All forms are available through MyCLC.

Hygiene & Showers

We want our campers to be clean, well-kept, and healthy. To do so, **we require all campers to brush their teeth, change their clothes, change their bedding, shower daily, wash hands often, brush/comb their hair, and carry-out other basic (but important) hygienic practices throughout the summer.** Of course, our counselors will help our youngest campers who will need assistance at times with these responsibilities.

Showering at camp is not the same as showering at home. Most campers are used to being in the shower with endless hot water, total privacy, and lots of time. At camp, it's not the same. Although each residential cabin has its own bathroom and at least three individual, stall showers (with curtains) and on-demand, tankless hot water heaters, showers are often taken more quickly and with more limited privacy. Campers will often have to condense their shower time but will still have enough time to make sure that they are properly cleaned. And just as the campers are sleeping in rooms with others where they need to change clothes and live together, the bathrooms will have campers going in and out of the showers constantly. We know this may take a little time to get used to, but our counselors always will be supportive of the campers to make sure that they are always comfortable and have the requisite level of privacy.

Inter-Camps (Athletics)

Throughout the sessions at camp, our staff will lead teams to compete in athletic events against other camps. These may include games of basketball, soccer, tennis, flag football, baseball, volleyball, swimming, and other activities. Teams are open to all campers (although teams and ages can vary from week to week and session to session), and the games are meant to be fun above all else. Of course, for those campers who are more competitive and serious about sports, these special events may enhance their camp experience. Camps that we play against are part of the Wayne County (PA) Camp Alliance, where there are over 30 camps that tend to participate in these head-to-head, invitational, and tournament events.

Intersession

Campers who are staying for Full Summer (both First and Second Sessions) remain at camp after First Session campers depart and enjoy Visiting Day with their families, followed by an “Intersession” program with each other and our staff until the Second Session campers arrive on Monday. More information about the program and schedule of intersession will be provided prior to the summer.

Late Arrival/Early Departure & Excused Absence

Arriving late or leaving early at camp can make adjusting to camp more difficult and lessen the enjoyment of the summer.

Therefore, camp discourages arrivals after the first day of camp and will usually not allow campers to leave unless there is specific permission given by our directors. It is essential that you contact us immediately if you need to make any special arrangements. We feel that a good beginning and end of the session can make all the difference!

Laundry

Laundry is done once each week by an outside professional laundry service that has been chosen to assure the highest quality of service possible with regards to providing clean, efficient, and reliable service. Laundry is picked up at camp by the company once each week and returned two days later. Each camper will receive an individual laundry bag (campers will be able to send laundry out only in the bag provided by camp). Each camper's laundry bag will be laundered on an individual basis. Please remember that all personal clothing items must be clearly marked with the camper's first and last name, even with the personal bag service. We

suggest using permanent or laundry markers (make sure names are legible) or sewn-on/ironed-on labels. Campers should bring their own laundry bag with them so that they can keep their dirty clothes together while their laundry is out of camp to be cleaned.

Longevity Gifts

Chestnut Lake likes to show its appreciation for, and recognition of, the commitment families have made to camp. Special Longevity Gifts (apparel) are given out over the summer to campers and staff who have spent 1, 3, 5, 8, or sometimes more years at camp. Please note that after the 2020 season was cancelled at Chestnut Lake, any camper enrolled that “rolled over” to enrollment (and attendance) in 2021 was given credit for the 2020 towards their Longevity Gift record.

Lost & Found

Chestnut Lake does not assume responsibility for the loss or damage of items brought to camp. We return lost and found items regularly throughout the camp season. **Please mark all your camper’s belongings with their first and last name.** Before the last day of each session, the lost and found is distributed as best we can to the campers. All items not claimed within a month of the end of the camp season may be laundered and donated to a charitable organization.

Mail

We do our best to encourage our campers write at least TWO TIMES each week. We feel that it is important for parents/guardians to hear from their children while at camp, even if the letters are relatively brief. Camp will be providing postcards for writing home throughout the session. Campers may write as many additional letters as they want to – to grandparents, siblings, friends, etc. Writing home should encourage families to write to their campers on a regular basis. Campers truly enjoy getting letters from home! Many parents/guardians send a letter that arrives at camp even before their child arrives for the session.

When writing, please be supportive. Letters from a parent/guardian describing to their child how much fun a summer trip has been, or how great everything is at home, or telling a child that you will pick them up from camp if they are unhappy, will certainly not help the camper’s experience. It’s great for a child to be aware of what’s happening at home, but especially for a younger child, hearing how sad you may be that the child is away can cause homesickness to intensify. Your kind and thoughtful words of encouragement can make a tremendous difference in your child’s camp experience. **We find it helpful to send pre-addressed (and stamped) envelopes or postcards with their child.** Parents may also want to review how to address an envelope with their children to ensure their letters make it home.

Money & Valuables

Campers do not need any money at camp. Spending money for trips is provided, as needed, and campers can get limited items from our Canteen (snack bar) without the use of cash. Money and valuables brought to camp can be stored in our camp safe and returned to families at the end of the session. **We cannot be responsible for any money, items, and/or valuables brought to camp that are misplaced or damaged.**

Mosquitoes, Ticks & Other Creatures

Each year, we address many issues regarding the infestation of mosquitoes and other insects to the best of our ability. We are diligent about having our staff be certain the campers are applying insect spray (or other materials) and double-checking for ticks when returning from walks or programs in the woods at camp. To control the tick, mosquito, and poison ivy population at camp, we also work with a private company that specializes in the control of these unwanted creatures. By putting tick control boxes around camp and spraying a nonhazardous spray, we can control and reduce the amount of potentially dangerous animals and vegetation. Their comprehensive program is non-invasive and helps to make sure that there is significantly less exposure to ticks, mosquitoes, and poison ivy.

To help assure that your child is as protected as possible, please be sure to send ample amounts of insect repellent with them to camp. Our staff will work hard to make sure that your children are safe and well-cared for while at camp, and we will utilize our excellent Medical Team whenever needed to follow-up with any health concerns.

Musical Instruments

If your child plays an instrument, feel free to send it with them to camp if it can be kept conveniently and that you appreciate how the environment at camp may affect it. **Please consider that all instruments are kept in the camper's bunk, and we cannot be responsible for any loss or damage to the item.** If your child does not have an instrument but would like to learn how to play the guitar, we have guitars in Record It (our building that houses our music room and recording studio) and often have staff members available for limited instruction. If you have any questions, please contact our camp office.

MyCLC (Photos, Email, etc.) & Campanion

All families are provided with access to our secure MyCLC site where they can view daily uploaded photos, send email to campers, and enjoy other options. This site is maintained in partnership with CampMinder (the same site and company that we work with for your online camp enrollment, billing, and account management). Information with instructions will be shared prior to camper arrival. By accessing MyCLC, parents/guardians may send campers email messages that will be delivered once daily with the mail. There is no charge for these emails being sent and they can be purchased through MyCLC (not from Chestnut Lake). Messages may ONLY be sent through this service, not our standard email address.

Campanion is a mobile app that we provide at no charge to our families. This is usable on any mobile device – iPhone or Android – and can give you full access to the daily photo uploads, video and written highlights, email system, and to complete many of the camp forms. You can download Campanion now ([click here for Apple Store](#) or [click here for Google Play](#)). Please note that the Campanion photo system also allows you to take advantage of its face-recognition technology so that photos of your own child will automatically be identified and presented to you each day for your review.

New Camper/Parent Orientation (Spring Fling)

Each spring (this year it will be held on Sunday, June 7th at 11 AM to 3 PM), we provide an opportunity for new campers and their parents to come to camp for an afternoon. Parents/guardians can take a tour and meet with members of our leadership (and other wonderful parents!), while campers will participate in activities run by camp staff and meet other new campers. Everyone will enjoy a great lunch in The Grove. Registration information for Spring Fling is available on MyCLC (in “Forms & Documents”).

Package Policy

To model our core values, we have a NO PACKAGE POLICY at Chestnut Lake. This means that unless there is explicit and specific permission from a Chestnut Lake staff member for a parent to send a package to our attention for their child, there will be **NO** packages accepted at camp. Please visit **Appendix F | Package Policy** for full details about the policy. Please note, campers celebrating a birthday while at camp can receive one package (see “Birthday” section below).

Packing for Camp

Getting ready for camp means starting to gather, label, organize, and pack supplies. Our camp leaders have run camps for many years and have packed their own children to head off to camps and summer programs around the world. We empathize with parents if they feel that packing can be a challenge, but we do try to make the process as straightforward as possible. Most importantly, please access a copy of the Packing List in your MyCLC account and plan for packing in advance. **Here are some tips on packing for camp:**

- **LABEL EVERYTHING.** Even the most responsible camper leaves a water bottle behind or mixes their shirt up with a friend's. If your child's belongings (clothing and non-clothing) are clearly labeled with their first and last name there is a much better chance they will have all their things throughout the session.
- **You can pack in whatever you would like.** A trunk, suitcase, duffel bag...any/all kinds of luggage are acceptable. These items will be stored after articles are unpacked, so please do not plan to have items kept inside.
- Other than what we indicate on the Packing List (such as a shoe holder for the end of the bed), we do not want any storage containers, plastic or other types of drawers, or other types of furniture to come with campers for use in the cabins. We provide the needed storage and help organize everything for the campers.

Parent Text Groups

We know that in today's age of parenting, many parents will find benefits to connecting through texting groups with other parents. It is not uncommon for parents of campers in the same cabins or Divisions to do the same throughout the summer, and sometimes these group chats can be very fun and helpful. At the same time, we know that these groups can unintentionally cause concerns and may also be exclusive. Chestnut Lake believes in open and transparent communication with parents, and we will always prefer to discuss camp and campers directly and personally. We send messages to families as we feel the need, and we call and speak to parents throughout the summer to discuss any concerns directly. We also respond to emails and phone calls around-the-clock.

If you are invited to a text group with other parents, please be considerate to ensure that these groups are as inclusive as possible, and most importantly, we suggest doing your best to use these groups for positive and encouraging communication. If at any point, there is a concern raised that has to do with camp life – whether it is regarding your own child – please consider reaching out to our directors or others at camp. Our awareness of concerns is paramount to our ability to address them, and to ensure that we are responsible and accountable for the care and attention given to each camper.

Pets

Pets (including dogs, cats, birds, and so on) are restricted from all camp property (even when dropping-off or picking-up a camper). This includes your child's new puppy – even if they are well-trained. Anyone who brings a pet onto the premises will be asked to remove the pet immediately. Please note: the Selkow family has a dog, Pearl, and she will be on-site throughout the summer.

Photos

We work hard throughout the summer to take as many photos as we can of a diverse array of age groups and activities. The purpose of sharing photos is for families to see the types of activities campers are participating in. We will not be taking a photograph of every child every day and cannot guarantee how often a camper will appear in photos and what the quality of those images will be. Photos are generally uploaded to MyCLC in the evening, but the time will vary each day due to several factors such as special events, schedule changes, and the number of photos taken. Families are advised to check photos first thing in the morning for their best chance at seeing the full array of photos from the previous day, rather than waiting for new photos at night. For more information on photos, read our [Appendix H | MyCLC Expectations](#).

Staff at Camp

At Chestnut Lake, we pride ourselves on the quality of the individuals who work with the campers, as well as the leadership structure that supports their work all summer. Therefore, our most important off-season task in preparing camp for your child is the hiring and training of the young role models who make up our staff. The two types of counselors that live and work with the campers on Boys and Girls Campuses are General Counselors and Specialty Counselors. General and Specialty Counselors tend to be high school graduates between 18 and 22 years old. They are hired for their skills, values, and dedication to serving the needs of our campers. Some have grown up at our camp, while others are hired elsewhere by our directors. All staff are hired to represent the values and qualities that we work to teach and reinforce within the camp's philosophical structure. All General and Specialty Counselors are subject to a thorough background check and interview process before being hired.

General Counselors are not assigned to run any activities during the average camp day (they travel with the campers from place to place), while Specialty Counselors have been hired to assist and/or lead program areas (Outdoor Adventure, Athletics, Arts, Waterfront, etc.) during the "9-to-5" aspect of the camp day. Camper groups/cabins tend to move to and from areas with the direct supervision of counselors.

All counselors will be part of a pre-camp Orientation & Training program (lasting 7-10 days, on average), as well as in-service education, reflection, and processing sessions during the camp season. Counselors are supervised by Division Leaders in each camper Division, providing them with active oversight, evaluation, skill-building, support, and motivation throughout the summer. Our Division Leaders (at least 21 years old) are often former counselors who have displayed exceptional skills in leadership and are trained further on child development, counseling, leadership, and other areas. Some Division Leaders work in the off-season as teachers, graduate students, or in other related fields. Division Leaders are supervised by our Assistant Directors, Erica Lakind (Girls

Campus), Kyle Yahn (Boys Campus), and Amy Winheld (Varsity Campus). They, in turn, are directly supported by our Directors and year-round leadership team.

Your children will receive intense and meaningful supervision at Chestnut Lake. Counselors and other staff will connect with them and will provide the type of nurturing and insight necessary to ensure their safety, well-being, and growth while away from home. We do not take for granted that campers will be well cared for simply by virtue of hiring capable staff, providing a great staff-to-camper ratio (averages 1:3 or 1:4), and having a structured environment. In fact, we are thrilled to be challenging ourselves, and our staff, to best monitor your child's camp experience as *active supervisors*.

Summer Communication

We understand how difficult it can be for families to cope with having a child away from home for an extended time at camp. Although the campers thrive in this immersive environment, parents may be sitting at home or work wondering, "What is going on up there?" To help ameliorate some of that anxiety, and to keep families informed regarding the basic happenings at Chestnut Lake, our communications team will work hard to provide various means of information throughout the summer.

Most communication will be sent via email, although we will also use Campanion for "micro posts", a Blog option on our web site at times, and both social media and texting as needed. A family's best way to stay informed is to check for email regularly throughout the session.

Tattoos, Piercings & Haircuts

Campers are allowed to have tattoos and piercings, but while attending camp, they will not be permitted to alter their appearance in a significant way, including cutting their hair.

Tipping & Gratuities

Chestnut Lake does not allow families to tip staff. Our counselors are professionals who are dedicated to serving every camper equally during the summer and they understand that they cannot accept any gratuities for their work. Families can show their support of staff by contributing in their name to Chestnut Lake and those monies will be used to support camper and staff programming in the future. If you choose to honor a staff member, the staff member will be notified of such contributions.

Trips

As part of our program at camp, we occasionally take our campers out of camp for special activities and trips. These excursions include such things as outdoor programs, amusement parks, or other low-key experiences. For these programs, our staff maintains the same strict policies on supervision and all activities are overseen by on-site administrators and other essential staff. **Under no circumstances may parents/guardians, family, or friends meet campers while they are out of camp during the session.**

Our Varsity, LT, and JC participants will also have a special multi-day trip scheduled each session (and sometimes an additional special trip as well). The details of these trips are planned thoughtfully each year and we utilize these trips to be educational, fun, and a positive group experience outside of the "normal" camp schedule. Information on these trips will be communicated to Varsity and JC families directly.

Visitation Policy

Only people with explicit and specific permission from the camp's directors will be permitted to visit camp while the campers are in session. If a parent/guardian needs to visit camp or pick up their child for an approved reason, please contact the camp office to make certain that arrangements are confirmed. Individuals who are picking up or dropping off staff members on their days off may not remain at camp for visitation without prior permission. Visiting Day for Full Summer campers will occur this summer on July 25th.

Wellness at Camp

The care of our campers is our most significant priority. Acting *in loco parentis* (in place of parents), we understand that it takes great intentional, active, and thoughtful supervision and support to make certain that every child is given the chance to enjoy the most positive experience at camp. To do so, we hire and train the best staff, including counselors, supervisors, and others.

To maintain the highest standards, Chestnut Lake also employs a Wellness Team (comprised of 3-5 Wellness Coaches/Coordinators) during the summer. These adults work together to support the needs of campers and staff, are based in our camp's Wellness Center office, and partner with both the Campus staff and the camp's Medical Team (nurses and physicians). Each person hired has relevant experience (as social workers, school counselors, psychologists, educators, parents, and/or camp supervision experience) and spends their days working alongside other staff to make sure that the care of the children is supplemented with special attention, accommodations, follow-up, and support.

The focus of our Wellness Team is to *coach* the counselors and other staff that work most closely with our campers. Although they may intervene, support, or personally assist individual campers in a more hands-on way at times, we try to utilize them most frequently as a resource for staff. Our counselors are young adults, and even our leadership staff benefit, too, from the insight and coaching from an adult with diverse experience. They oversee the sharing of information through Daily Camper Reports and meetings (as well as other means), and they consult with staff to help to resolve any concerns throughout the summer. There is a Wellness Coach assigned to Boys Campus, Girls Campus, and Varsity Campus throughout the summer.

Wellness Coaches are not the primary communicators and “go-betweens” for families during the summer, instead you should expect the Assistant Directors assigned to your child’s Campus to be the point-person unless instructed otherwise. Assistant Directors will be able to respond to questions and concerns, but also will be best suited to redirect or partner with others to get the right person to respond to a call or email throughout the day. The Assistant Directors may feel that the Division Leader – more closely assigned to the camper’s group – may be best to respond, or maybe they will connect to the Medical Team to reply to a parent, or it might be best to allow our Office Manager or someone in the office take care of whatever need a parent has. And of course, our Directors will always be in the loop and may often be the right person to discuss any issues with parents. Our Campus Assistant Directors can help you as the “quarterback” of communication, but you can also always call the main office number and allow us to help you find the right person to assist with your wellness-related concern.

Appendix A | Camper Wellness



All campers will come to camp with individual needs that are important. Whether campers present issues that need special attention – including those that will need regular access to medications, those with dietary restrictions, or those coming to camp wrestling with a range of challenges – or we are simply caring for kids that are doing well and have typical needs, we are presented with an incredibly broad range of social, functional, and emotional concerns daily. For kids to find success at camp, including those who present or self-identify with or without significant needs, they will need to have additional support, the insight of experienced professionals, accountability and follow-through in their care, and a commitment to their well-being.

Likewise, our staff members require support. Despite their enthusiastic and determined efforts to serve the campers' needs as their highest priority, they are also need assistance, both personally and professionally, too. Our staff are extraordinarily effective at helping campers through supervision, feedback, and coaching, but they also rely on the strength and talents of our entire staff team to help them do their best. We give them hands-on attention through problem-solving, role modeling, and appreciative inquiry, and we identify means of delivering staff development and support through many different resources.

If there is a group in our community that is more demanding than ever before, it is our campers' parents. Their expectations of us have never been higher, and we do not shy away from the challenge to provide them with the best customer service and communication possible. To appeal to the families that send their children to Chestnut Lake, we must commit to a consistent, effective, and honest partnership that will benefit the child without compromising camp's standards and policies.

During the camp season, we will have the following positions as part of this wellness focus:

- Camp Directors, Assistant Directors, Director of Staff & Camper Experience, and Engagement Director
- Division Leaders
- Wellness Coaches, Wellness Coordinators & Specialty Foods Coordinator
- Medical team (Head Nurse, Nurses, and Doctors)
- Communications Team (including Communications Director)
- Office Team (including Office Manager)

Our unique approach to wellness at Chestnut Lake is both contemporary and timely. Although Chestnut Lake does not aspire to be a therapeutic environment, we are committed to being a place where people feel safe. If you have any concerns at all about your child's wellness while at camp, please be in touch with our directors.

Appendix B | First-Time Advice



According to Bob Ditter, a renowned psychologist and camping expert, the more a child has a chance to “practice” behaviors, the more the child will experience mastery. Going to camp for most children will be most successful if we can try the following:

Speak openly about your child being away. Check your own feelings about having your child be away for 5 days, 4 weeks, 3 weeks or even 7 weeks. Children are keen sensors of parental angst. If you are not ready yourself, it may be harder for your child to leave and feel permission to have fun. Be honest about your apprehension but do so in the most positive way possible.

Develop a good relationship with the staff. If you or your child is homesick, an understanding director or member of the staff can help you through the rough spots.

Problem-solve with your child before camp. “What should you do if you are upset?” “What will you do if you are not feeling well?” Parents/guardians should try role-playing some possible camp problems with their child to help identify the concerns that may need to be addressed (by you or by the camp) before arriving. Encouraging your child to advocate for themselves enforces that there are people at camp to help with any struggles.

Begin having sleepovers. If your child has never had a sleepover, start with either a best friend in the neighborhood or with a favorite relative (grandparents, cousins, etc.).

Understand the showers. If your child typically takes baths at home, have them begin “practicing” taking showers. Also, you should talk to your child about the “semi-private” nature of showers at camp. While campers can pull the shower curtain closed during their own shower, the uniquely informal and tight-knit community of camp and the limited time preventing long showers will likely be an adjustment.

Getting ready is a partnership. Have your child participate both in shopping for camp and some of the packing.

Remember why you are sending your child to camp in the first place. It may be to have fun, to develop and grow, to make great friends, or to gain self-confidence, self-reliance, and resilience. Those outcomes do not materialize without the chance to stretch one’s comfort zone, and to overcome hurdles along the way.

Speak to the parent/guardian of a child who has already attended Chestnut Lake. Parents/guardians have their own language when it comes to children, and a parent/guardian who’s been there can offer insights into camp. If you would like to contact families before the summer, please call the camp office in the off-season and we can provide references for you.

Appendix C | Camper “Prep”



Help with Missing Home

It is important to remember that going to camp can be a major change for any child and that it is 100% normal for a child to feel “homesickness” (whether they are coming for the first time or are experienced campers). The most important thing is for parents/guardians to feel good about camp themselves and about the idea of their child being there, and to project that.

- ★ When packing for camp, ask your child what special (non-valuable) personal items they might want to take along. This is to increase comfort levels by having something familiar nearby as they adjust to a new place.
- ★ Talk about going to camp in the days leading up to it. About one week beforehand, start talking about what they are looking forward to, what they want to do most at camp when they get there, etc.
- ★ Speak openly about homesickness. Kids often feel jittery about going to a new place and you can inquire about how they are feeling. Feeling nervous is normal. Reassure your child that you believe in them and their ability to make friends.
- ★ Second-year campers (and other “veterans”) can experience homesickness, too. If they had “the greatest time of their life” last summer, they could feel letdown that camp is not the same and they need time to adjust to their new bunkmates and counselors. Remind your child they will once again have fun, but they will have new experiences and make new friends.
- ★ Have a letter ready to mail a day or two before camp begins so it is there the day your child arrives. Avoid long descriptions of all the things they might be missing, as this may make them feel torn about missing out.

What to Say (and What NOT to Say)

Here are examples of **GREAT** things to say to your child as they prepare to leave for camp:

- “*The camp knows how to get in touch with me if they need to.*”
- “*I’m going to be checking MyCLC and the photos to see how you’re doing.*”
- “*I’m going to write to you.*”
- “*I love you and I’m really happy that you’ll be having this experience this summer.*”

Here are some **NOT GREAT** things to say to your child as they prepare to leave for camp:

- “*I’ll pick you up early if you get too homesick.*”
- “*Just try camp for a week and see how you like it.*”
- “*You have to go to camp so that we can get a vacation.*”
- “*You can call me anytime.*”

The best advice we try to give is: **ASK US FOR ADVICE**. We don’t want to overwhelm parents with information, but we are always willing to give our opinion, share our insight from many years of experience, and to brainstorm together about how we can work together to make this summer successful for your child.

Appendix D | Behavior at Camp

We strive to create a sacred community that is safe for individuals to take risks by providing them the tools necessary to find success in doing so. It is our goal to provide a well-supervised and nurturing environment for our campers and teens, and we only employ staff members who understand their role as strong role models, educators, and supervisors.

Chestnut Lake is a place where participants will create, learn, and live together while making memories that will last a lifetime. This unique opportunity is exciting yet challenging. Living together requires a lot of cooperation, sharing, patience, and respect. In addition, we have high expectations and standards of behavior at Chestnut Lake. **We do not tolerate abuse or exclusive behaviors of any kind, either physical or verbal.**

One of the goals at Chestnut Lake is to **help individuals learn to be responsible for their own behavior**. In most situations, staff will try to solve behavioral problems without having to involve parents. This is different if a person exceeds the limits understood by the camp community. **We expect:**

- **Respect for all living things**, which means that no person will ever hurt another person physically, sexually, or psychologically. We will treat all animals with respect, too.
- **Respect for the environment**, which includes the natural environment in which we live during the summer, activity, and program spaces, and one's own personal space.
- **Alcohol and other drugs may not be possessed or used at camp** and the consequence for possession or use will be dismissal from camp. No camper may possess any smoke-able substance, matches, or lighters.
- **Camp is not a place to experiment sexually**. Campers will hear that any behavior beyond discreet hugging and kissing (fully clothed, of course) is not permitted.
- **Respect for camp as an inclusive community**, which includes the welcoming and valuing of campers with differences and disabilities, both in your bunk and in the wider camp community.
- **Individuals will make choices that are good for themselves and others and will take responsibility for those choices.**

With these standards and expectations in place, the **administration of Chestnut Lake reserves the right to ask that a person at risk to themselves or the community be removed from camp immediately**. We will expend every effort on behalf of the entire camp community to make the camp experience a positive one. We hope to form a partnership with families to deal with concerns in an honest, productive, and effective manner. Please remember that Chestnut Lake is a family, and we respect and value our relationships.

At Chestnut Lake, **we pledge to care for your children and help guide them on the right path towards positive experiences, building relationships, and making good choices**. Together, we can help ensure that your child/children has/have a meaningful, fulfilling, and fun summer.

If you have concerns about the behavior of your camper prior to the summer, please reach out to our directors so that we may discuss strategies and tools with you that would be helpful to know going into the summer.

Appendix E | Electronics (Screen-Free) Policy

In keeping with our desire to build a community at Chestnut Lake that is focused on healthy engagement with other people and our unique surroundings, our Electronics Policy is designed to:

- ✓ Allow campers to fully embrace and “plug into” the connections they make with other campers and staff as they “unplug” from their electronics
- ✓ Encourage our campers to spend less time on their beds or in their cabins and more time outdoors
- ✓ Reduce the stress associated with the damage to and theft of electronics while in our rugged and communal camp environment
- ✓ Give campers a much-needed break from the world of technology that becomes more and more encompassing at home
- ✓ Ensure that our campers are not exposed to age-inappropriate material without intentional and thoughtful support of our staff
- ✓ Remove the divide between “the haves and the have-nots” in our cabins



Research has provided confirmation for what we have instinctively known to be true about a camp experience, that time away from screen media – with increased social interaction – may improve comprehension of nonverbal emotional cues. In the context of camp, removing the distraction of technology allows campers to engage in relationships, activities, and the beauty of their surroundings more fully. We are proud that we can provide to campers and staff this opportunity to unplug and ask for your assistance in our enforcement of this policy.

UNPLUGGING AT CAMP: OUR POLICY

To demonstrate our commitment to providing a summer camp experience that emphasizes building community and enhancing relationships and focuses on people and places and not screen time, we have created an electronics policy that is outlined in detail below. Please note that any device prohibited below and any device with the ability to connect to the internet (even if you've disabled Wi-Fi) will be collected and stored by our camp's staff for the duration of a camper's session.

iPods/MP3 PLAYERS

If your child would like to have access to their own music at camp, please send an inexpensive MP3 player, or an older-generation iPod that does not have a touch screen. There are also newer devices such as the [AiMoonsa Player](#) and [Mighty](#) (**Note: We no longer recommend the "JOLIKE" player because the manufacturer has changed its features**) that you can explore as options as well. We will not allow any MP3 players/mobile devices with touch screens. This way we will ensure that our campers cannot watch videos, TV shows, or movies, or access the internet while at camp.

DIGITAL CAMERAS

We encourage you to only send a digital camera to camp if your child is an avid photographer and expects to select Digital Photography as an elective during the summer. Please only consider an inexpensive digital camera, and please discuss proper handling of the camera and how pictures should be taken. No photos should ever be taken that are inappropriate or without the permission of others in the photos. We recognize that many digital cameras come with the ability to record videos. If your child will be bringing a camera with video capability, please have a conversation with him/her about the appropriate times and places to record while at camp. Again, please leave expensive cameras at home.

ELECTRONIC HANDHELD GAME DEVICES (GAMEBOYs, PSPs, NINTENDO DSs, etc.)

No electronic handheld game devices will be allowed in camp. We would much rather have the campers using time to rest or to socialize with other campers in the cabin, building friendships and community in the process. Camp is designed for social interaction, and solitary play on a device is antithetical to that. We are confident that “unplugging” campers from video games for a few short weeks will result in more time playing together, enhanced interaction between bunk mates, and more fun overall.

CELL PHONES

It is our long-standing policy that campers are **NOT PERMITTED** to have cell phones at camp. Cell phones with or without a SIM card are prohibited, even for use as a camera. We believe that being at camp is an opportunity for your child to experience a world beyond home and a chance for you and your child to practice “letting go.” “Letting go” allows children to develop autonomy, independence, and a stronger sense of self. It allows them to make new friends, take responsibility for themselves and their bunkmates, problem solve, and mature. These things cannot be achieved when parents are only a phone call away in such an unmonitored and accessible manner.

Although cell phones have been strictly prohibited at camp for many years, unfortunately in some cases campers and/or their families have challenged this policy and have brought a cell phone to camp. The consequences of this are significant, as it can lead to conflicts within the cabin as campers focus on their friends or concerns at home rather than their friends at camp. We feel cell phone use at camp is counter to the values we teach and uphold at Chestnut Lake and interferes with an important aspect of the overnight camp experience. If we learn that any camper has a cell phone in camp, it will be confiscated for the remainder of their time at camp and returned to you. Please take the time to discuss this policy with your camper. We know that adherence to this policy is something that requires an open understanding and partnership between children and their parents.

We understand that some campers that might travel by air to camp may have cell phones in their possession while traveling to or from camp without their parents for important reasons. Please discuss with your child that their cell phone must be turned in to their counselor, Assistant Director, or directors immediately upon arrival. The phone will be returned to your child before they leave camp.

LAPTOPS, NETBOOKS, iPads, TABLETS, DVD PLAYERS, SMART WATCHES, E-READERS

Campers are not permitted to have these – or similar electronic devices – in camp. Please make sure you purchase and pack any books your child might be required to read from their school’s summer reading list.

ONE LAST WORD ON ELECTRONICS...

We recommend that your child powers down, unplugs, and takes what we’re certain is a well-needed break from the world of electronics. Therefore, we will not assume responsibility for any items brought that are lost or damaged during the time they are at camp that fall outside of this policy. What your child brings to camp is their responsibility to take care of, and we want to unburden them as much as we possibly can.

Appendix F | No Package Policy

Chestnut Lake is committed to providing an excellent, fun, immersive camp experience where we live our core values every day. One of these values is that – at Chestnut Lake – people from all backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to be members of a community where they feel safe and secure to express and be themselves, on an equal playing field.

Allowing packages contrasts these ideals that we are trying to reinforce at camp and in the past has raised various concerns, such as:

- Feelings of separation and isolation between campers who receive packages and campers who do not
- Senses of jealousy or inferiority between campers who receive packages and those who do not
- Burdens on parents when they feel they need to send packages to “compete” or “keep up with” other families
- Limited space and storage in some cabins for additional items
- Concerns pertaining to the environmental impact of boxes and packaging waste, as well as the excess “throw-away” items accumulated in our cabins

Due to these concerns and to model our core values, we have a NO PACKAGE POLICY at Chestnut Lake. This means that unless there is explicit and specific permission from a director for a parent to send a package to our attention for their child, there will be **NO** packages accepted at camp. We will continue to accept standard flat business size (#10) or greeting card envelopes so that families can correspond with campers, but anything larger than this will not be accepted or delivered. Packages will either be held at the office to be picked up on closing day or will be returned to the sender.

Important Questions & Answers:

What if my camper needs something like a piece of clothing or an important toiletry that was forgotten at home, lost, or is something that they ran out of while at camp?

We recommend contacting the Main Office (either call at 570-729-1010 or email info@chestnutlakecamp.com) to discuss the need more personally. If it is something that we cannot provide for your camper, you will be asked to send the item to camp to the attention of our WELLNESS TEAM or MAIN OFFICE (or another member of our staff) with the camper’s name and bunk and they will make sure the item gets delivered to your camper. Please note this will be done on an exception-only basis, and extra items included in the box and not discussed previously will be held until closing day or returned. Fortunately, we will keep many sundry items in stock at camp and have the ability to acquire items that are needed for campers using our local drivers and delivery services. If there is an item we need to purchase for a camper, we will be in contact with you and will arrange for payment/repayment.

Can I send something to a staff member or send something with someone else who is visiting camp to give to my child?

No. We appreciate that some of our parents have friends or family who are working at camp or will be visiting camp, but we do not want to police the items coming into camp with individuals other than our Wellness Team, Office Team, or year-round directors.

What if my child has a birthday at camp?

We make sure that birthdays occurring at camp are celebrated and that those campers feel special. Birthday phone calls will be coordinated, and we will allow for families to send one package to their child for their birthday at camp. If you send a birthday package to your child, please put “Birthday Package” on the label so we can make sure it gets to your child on their birthday.

Thank you in advance for doing your part to ensure that Chestnut Lake can continue to promote and support our values and principles.

Appendix G | Social Networking & Internet

At Chestnut Lake, we care about our community members 365 days each year. We work hard to hire, train, evaluate, and motivate staff members who will help to teach and reinforce in our campers the positive values that are at the core of our camp philosophy. And, above all else, we recognize the power of the examples we all set, as staff, for our campers and their families.

Of course, we also appreciate that our campers and staff are entitled to private lives outside the boundaries of the camp community. It is our hope, therefore, that for a staff member or camper at Chestnut Lake, a person will choose to live their life in a manner that displays the type of integrity expected during our summer at Chestnut Lake. We also hope that all members of our community will remember that each person's private life is indeed just that – *private*. Details of relationships and leisure time pursuits must remain that way, and while sharing and connecting with other campers or staff is vital to the development of trust and counseling in our cabins and camp, it should never cross the line of appropriateness that we define at Chestnut Lake. Please read the following carefully and understand that we have an expectation that **ALL CAMPERS AND STAFF MEMBERS** will abide by these rules as a member of our community.

SAFETY

First and foremost, we are concerned with your safety and the safety of all campers and staff. This means:

- Only professional relationships are permitted between campers and staff members at Chestnut Lake. Romantic relationships, in person or on the internet, are not permitted.
- Socializing (between staff members and campers) during the off-season is encouraged only through official, camp functions or other adult-supervised activities, or other situations authorized by the camp directors and/or parents/guardians (“authorized” contact would include our Winter Reunions or Zoom Meet-Ups).
- If you become aware of any cyber-bullying or other types of inappropriate contact on the internet, contact camp immediately. Also, if any camper (or staff member) discloses to you information that any reasonable person would be concerned about, you are asked to report this immediately to the directors.

REPUTATION

As Chestnut Lake campers and staff, you always represent the camp. This means:

- How you choose to behave is a reflection on you, the camp, and all members of our community. Thus, your choices to discuss “Chestnut Lake,” wear “Chestnut Lake” gear, and in any way represent the camp may have significant repercussions.
- As part of any staff member’s employment and the attendance of any camper, the camp may review all available materials in the public domain and will reserve the right to require all information a person posted on the internet to be viewable by camp’s year-round directors if there are any reasons to warrant this as viewed by the directors.
- Chestnut Lake may choose to refuse and/or terminate employment of a staff member at any time, or deny enrollment to a camper, due to the nature of information that may reflect negatively on a person’s professionalism, decision-making, behavior, recreational activities, or other elements of their character.

PRIVACY

We sincerely respect each person’s privacy. This means:

- Photos or other images/likenesses of campers, or anyone under the age of 18 years, may not be shared, posted, or transmitted to others (when these relationships or connections are because of camp attendance or employment). If such images are taken in the normal course of attendance and/or employment, these will be for personal use only.
- We recommend that each staff person’s internet presence should always restrict access to campers. If you are a staff member (or have been one in the past), we ask that you do not share personal email addresses or telephone numbers with campers, nor do we suggest you allow them access to personal sites such as Facebook or Instagram where your profile may

appear. If you do receive correspondence/contact from a camper, please feel free to contact our camp office to discuss next steps.

- If a camper “friends” a staff member or visits one’s personal page in such environments as Facebook, we ask that staff members restrict their access to no more than a “limited” level.
- Please remember that the internet is a public forum. No matter what your intention may be, statements and information shared can (and will) be interpreted in various ways, by various people you know and complete strangers. Be thoughtful about what you share.
 - Please keep in mind that things that are shared on the internet, as they may relate in any way to Chestnut Lake or to relationships that are the product of attendance at Chestnut Lake, could be seen by others and may, in fact, impact one’s own attendance and/or employment at Chestnut Lake.

COMMUNITY

At Chestnut Lake, we recognize that the foundation for growth (for campers and staff) is the strong bond that forms between campers and staff members. These relationships are vital to the development of social skills, independence, self-esteem, healthy risk-taking, and many other skills. It is our goal to support these relationships effectively through the camp season and year-round in a manner that will not put any member of the community at risk or subject them to unwarranted harassment, attention, or any form of prejudice.

- Contact between campers and staff (out of season) should be restricted and should follow the guidelines discussed herein. Failure to abide by these standards may impact the camp’s decision to employ, and/or reemploy, the staff member and could impact the enrollment (or re-enrollment) of a camper.
- No person is permitted to use the camp’s logo or name without the expressed consent of the directors.
- We encourage each staff member to always behave in ways that reflect the seriousness of the responsibility of being a youth professional and leader.

Developed by:

Aaron Selkow

Chestnut Lake, Owner/Director

Christopher A. Thurber, PhD, ABPP

Psychologist, Author, Consultant, Educator

Appendix H | MyCLC Expectations

Chestnut Lake made a choice years ago to join the growing number of resident camps that use online email, photo, and information services. It puts us in good company, and we know that many of our families value this opportunity to feel connected to their child's experience at camp. **We work hard throughout the summer to take as many photos as we can, use the available (and sometimes unreliable) technology that we have access to in the mountains, and keep things running to provide the highest level of service.** However, we want to set reasonable expectations for families to have with respect to this:

- Enjoy some [perspective from our Director and Communications Director shared with camp parents](#) during the summer of 2023. 😊
- The MyCLC service is meant to be an asset for families but is secondary to all aspects of the camp program, operations, systems, campers, staff and other concerns. While we try to make the service the best it can be, it is simply not the highest priority for us.
- Chestnut Lake has a limited Communications Team staff that is responsible for taking photos, writing content, gathering photos from others in camp, uploading and managing the technology to make the information available, and troubleshooting problems. Thus, **we will NOT be taking a photograph of every child every day.** In fact, we cannot guarantee how often any camper will appear in photos (and what the quality of those images will be). We will, however, try to be sure that each Division has photos representing their activity (on average) every other day. We do our best to capture as much variety as possible, but photos are taken mostly candidly and without a fixed schedule. If you do not see a photo of your child one day, please don't be concerned. If you've been looking for a few days and are concerned, we understand that you may contact us. However, we will always be in touch if there is a problem regarding your camper.
- Just because your child does not have a broad smile, is not standing with their friends, seems to be wearing the same shirt as the day before, or is not seen doing their "favorite things," this does not mean there is *anything wrong*. By the same token, a smiling camper who is with their friends and is doing their favorite activity is unlikely to be having a worry-free day. Photos are only a snapshot view of an experience that has millions of moments.
- Photos are generally uploaded in the evening, but the time will vary each day due to several factors such as special events, schedule changes, and the number of photos taken. Families are advised to check photos first thing in the morning for their best chance at seeing the full array of photos from the previous day, rather than waiting for new photos at night.
- Technical problems with the MyCLC service are usually an issue with technology (itself) or MyCLC (not Chestnut Lake). Please be patient and understanding that we are reliant on things that we do not control.



Community Service Awards (CSA) and Director of the Day selections are two of the most special means of recognition we celebrate at Chestnut Lake each summer. Please enjoy reading about these two traditions, *below*:

Appendix I | Community Service Award & Director of the Day

Who we recognize with a

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



The Community Service Award (CSA) is the highest honor a camper or staff member can receive at Chestnut Lake. It recognizes individuals who have made a significant positive impact on our community, enhancing the experience and lives of others at camp. Chestnut Lake Camp thrives on fostering Character, Leadership, and Confidence ('CLC') in all campers and staff, creating an environment of comfort, growth, and self-assurance.

Nomination Guidelines

Before writing your nomination, please consider the following guidelines:

- A nominee should demonstrate exceptional Character, Leadership, Confidence, or other meaningful and positive values.
- A nominee's actions should have served to make camp and/or the community better (since this is a "Community Service" award, consider if the impact made by this person has affected only you or other people as well).
- Consider sharing examples of a nominee's actions so that others can understand why they deserve such an award.
- The CSA is not an award *just for friendship*. Friendship is an important aspect of camp, and we have hundreds of individuals that are good friends to others. The CSA is meant for those that have gone above and beyond the usual standards of friendship.

Please ask your Division Leader or Campus Leader for a Nomination Form.



Bringing Out the Best in You!

Who we recognize as

DIRECTOR of the DAY

Each week, one member of Girls Campus, Boys Campus, and Varsity Campus will be chosen by Campus Leaders as Director of the Day (DoD). Chestnut Lake Camp values leadership and encourages every camper and staff member to find ways to develop and model leadership throughout the summer. Leaders are not more important than followers, but without leaders, our community's needs will be more difficult to meet. Our DoDs represent the talented leaders that make Chestnut Lake special, and we are grateful to honor them.

Selection Process

Campus Leaders will consider the following in choosing a Director of the Day:

- A DoD candidate is someone that displays capacity in terms of communication, empathy, adaptability, integrity, problem-solving, accountability, team-building, fellowship, conflict-resolution, or other similar qualities.
- A DoD candidate does not need to be the most outspoken — leaders can lead from the back as well as from the front.
- DoDs will be chosen weekly and will be announced at Line Up. The DoD will serve in the role until attending a meeting with camp's Directors at the end of the day.
- DoDs will wear a special shirt (to be easily identified by their peers) and will carry a notebook throughout the day. DoDs will write down their ideas to make Chestnut Lake a better place — these ideas can be their own, or they can come from their fellow campers or their staff. The ideas will be shared with Chestnut Lake's Directors, and at least one of the suggestions will be put into action.

Please ask your Division Leader or Campus Leader any questions about Director of the Day.



Appendix J | Campfire Tales

Every Friday night at Chestnut Lake, we gather around the fire — a circle of warmth, light, and community that feels timeless. *Campfire Tales* grew from that same spirit. Each week during the summer, Aaron writes a reflection that captures the essence of life at camp — the joy, the learning, the friendships, and the quiet moments that remind us why this experience matters so much.

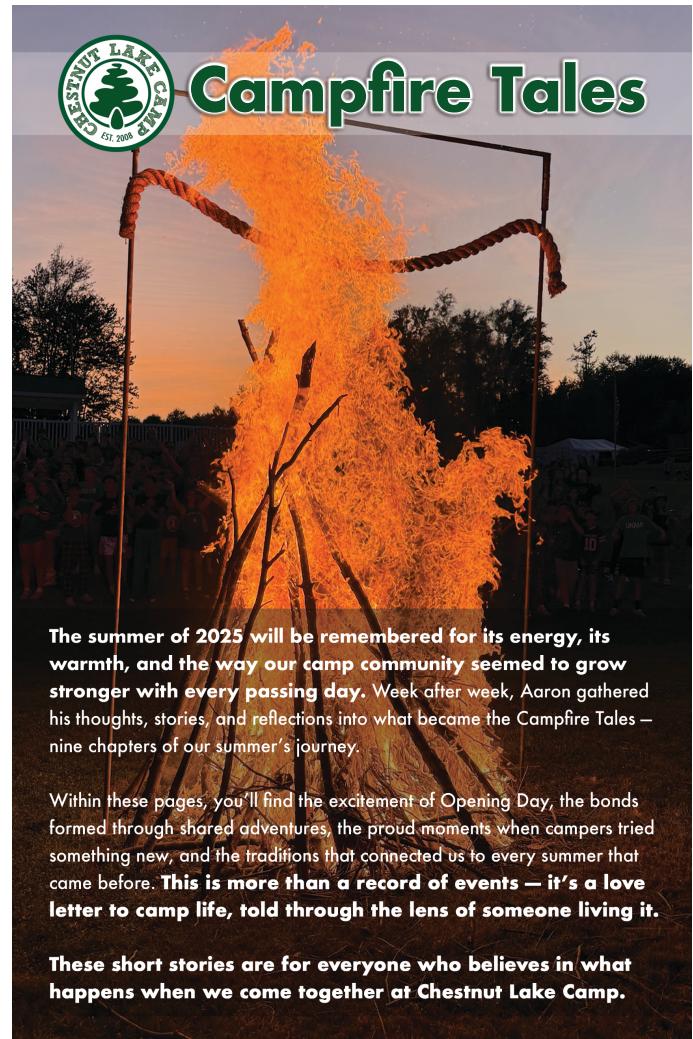
These stories are meant for everyone connected to Chestnut Lake — campers and parents, staff, friends old and new. They're part journal, part reflection, and part love letter to what happens when young people are given the space to grow, belong, and bring out their best selves.

Over time, *Campfire Tales* has become a living record of our journey together. From the opening reflection "It's Always Summer," to pieces like "The Real Leadership," and "One for the Books," each entry captures a chapter of the season — moments of laughter, learning, courage, and connection.

Whether you're reading for the first time or revisiting your favorite summer memories, *Campfire Tales* is an invitation to pause and remember what's at the heart of Chestnut Lake: the belief that camp doesn't just happen for seven weeks a year — it lives within us, all year long.

[**Click here to access the Campfire Tales from 2025**](#)

(And if you would like a hard copy sent to you, please email Aaron at aaron@chestnutlakecamp.com).



The summer of 2025 will be remembered for its energy, its warmth, and the way our camp community seemed to grow stronger with every passing day. Week after week, Aaron gathered his thoughts, stories, and reflections into what became the Campfire Tales — nine chapters of our summer's journey.

Within these pages, you'll find the excitement of Opening Day, the bonds formed through shared adventures, the proud moments when campers tried something new, and the traditions that connected us to every summer that came before. **This is more than a record of events — it's a love letter to camp life, told through the lens of someone living it.**

These short stories are for everyone who believes in what happens when we come together at Chestnut Lake Camp.