



gcnwi

Summer Camp Information Packet

Camp Butternut Springs



Camp Director

Shannon Ross

“Disappearing Turtle”

sross@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

(224) 249-3917



Assistant Camp Director

Audrey Clinkert

“Clover”

aclinkert@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

(312) 912-6373

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Getting to and from Camp Butternut Springs

Camp Address 650 N 175 W
Valparaiso, IN 46385

Camp Phone Number Summer Camp Phone: 708-553-2227
The summer camp phone number will be answered starting June 1 through August 3. If you have questions before or after that time, please contact the camp director or our Customer Support team.

- Customer Support Phone: (855) 456-8347
- Customer Support Email: customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

Arriving at Camp If you arrive at camp before check-in starts, please enter the camp driveway and make an immediate left to enter the first parking lot. Enter one of the four defined lanes and pull as far forward as you can so that we can minimize the number of vehicles that may be left to wait on the road. The check-in process will begin in this parking lot.

Check-In ***Please note that Camp Butternut Springs is in the Central Standard Time Zone.** Check In is 1:30pm-3:00pm*. If your camper's last name starts with A-L, we recommend arriving between 1:30-2:15pm. If your camper's last name starts with M-Z, we recommend arriving between 2:15-3:00pm. If you are carpooling with a camper whose name is in a different recommended arrival time, please come at a time that best fits your travel plans. Please note that regardless of what time you arrive, you may have to wait as we will have a large influx of families dropping off their camper(s) at the same time. However, you may arrive in the time frame that is most convenient for you, but please do not arrive earlier than 1:15 p.m.

In the first parking lot, we will confirm we have your camper's completed paperwork and collect any waivers (as needed) for your camper's session. There will be an opportunity to fill out any missing information at this time.

The next stop will be at our second parking lot. Here you will be directed through different stations to check in medication and/or camper cell phone(s) and drop off mail and trading post money. More information about health and wellness at camp, cell phones, and camper mail can be found later in this packet.

The last check-in station is where the camper will exit the vehicle; staff will assist with unloading luggage and complete a health screening that consists of temperature and lice checks. Please have your camper's luggage easily accessible in the trunk or near a door; we will provide luggage tags during the check-in process so your camper's luggage can be clearly labelled.

Check-In (continued)	Family members may get out of the vehicle for finals goodbyes but must stay at the vehicle. Camp staff will bring your camper to their staff member. Luggage will be transported to living units, and staff will assist campers with setting up their beds and begin orienting them to camp.
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If pets are in the vehicle, please do not allow them to get out of the car.

Check-Out *Please note that Camp Butternut Springs is in the Central Standard Time Zone.	Check-out begins at 3:00 p.m. with our closing ceremony. Please do not arrive earlier than 2:30 p.m. All family members are invited to attend the closing ceremony but please leave pets at home.
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If you are unable to pick up your camper at the 3:00 p.m. check out time, please see the section below regarding After Care.

Upon arrival at camp, a staff member will check your photo ID and have you sign a release form for your camper(s). **You will keep this form in your possession until it is returned to your camper's counselor in exchange for your camper.**

Luggage will be nearby and sorted by living unit. You are welcome to begin picking up luggage before or after closing ceremony. If you pick up your camper's luggage before closing ceremony, we strongly encourage you return after with your camper to confirm none of their belongings were missed (things may be re-packed differently than when you dropped off and wet or dirty clothes may have been put in a separate bag).

Closing ceremony begins promptly at 3:00 p.m. with a camper-led flag ceremony. Each program will have the opportunity to share a brief description of their week and sing a camp song for everyone. At the end of closing ceremony, campers will line up behind their counselor. You will need to turn in your signed camper release form to the counselor for your camper to be released to you. Your camper will have any medication(s) and a check-out envelope containing camp patches, badge card, their cell phone (if checked in), and any leftover trading post money.

Camp will remain open until 4:30 p.m. for any camper who would like to show their family around camp.

After Care	NEW this year , if you are unable to make it for the 3:00 p.m. check-out time at the end of your camper's session, you are able to add-on After Care and pick your camper up at 7:00 p.m. on the last day of their session.
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After Care runs from 3:00-7:00 p.m. and includes dinner. Campers will be picked up from the Dining Hall; there is a no closing ceremony for campers in After Care.

Late Check-In &
Early Departure

Please be aware that by arranging a late arrival or early departure for a camp session, campers will unfortunately miss parts of the camp program.

All late check-ins and early departures must be pre-arranged and indicated on your camper's paperwork in CampDoc at the times below. After paperwork is due on May 1, all changes to your check-in and/or check-out times should be coordinated with the camp director.

Late check-ins can take place at 7:00 p.m. on the first day of your camper's session or at 8:30 a.m. on the second day of your camper's session.

Early departures can take place at 9:00 a.m., or 12:00 p.m. on the last day of your camper's session.

Bridge Weekend

Attending multiple weeks of camp and don't want to go home? This summer, you can register for a bridge weekend where you can stay the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday between sessions and turn one week of camp into two. This is not a stand-alone program; campers must be registered for programs before and after the weekend.

Absences

If you need to make a last-minute cancellation, please inform us of your camper's absence by emailing the camp director or calling the camp phone at (708) 553-2227; if you need to leave a message, please include your camper's full name and program.

Inclusion, Access, & Accommodations

Overview Welcome to Girl Scout Camp! That's what we say to every camper who arrives at one of our amazing summer programs because together we are creating a welcoming environment for all.

Every child needs to feel valued and respected. Respecting ourselves and other is part of our Girl Scout Law. Our program provides experiences that build life skills, leadership capacity, and a passion to make the world a better place.

Girl Scouts values inclusion and diversity, and that is why we are on a journey to better understand how to incorporate those values into the camp experiences we offer. Our learnings along the way will help us improve processes and protocols each year going forward.

Our camp directors will work with families to make our experiences accessible for all Girl Scouts, including current members who may be questioning their gender identity. These members may explore the use of different pronouns or name while at camp before sharing with their friends and family at home. Girl Scouts supports these members and will act in their best interests by providing a safe and affirming space in which they can be themselves.

To create an inclusive and safe environment for all, we encourage you to contact the camp director so we can work directly with you. This will start with a conversation about what the camp experience may be like for your camper, and what accommodations and supports are available. Camp directors can also help guide you toward the best programs and location for your camper.

Standard Practices Following are standard practices that we follow to create safe spaces and a respectful environment for all:

- All Girl Scouts are entitled to privacy when using restrooms, changing rooms, and showers. Unless a reasonable request is made by the Girl Scout, no separate sleeping arrangements are necessary. Otherwise, toilets and showers at camp are single use. Lockable bathroom stalls can be used by all campers and staff as private changing spaces.
 - Campers are grouped in living units by program group.
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Standard Practices
(continued)

- For campers sleeping on site, each camper will be assigned their own bed. Beds are private spaces not shared with others. Campers have separate sleeping spaces from staff members. If a camper needs the attention of a staff member during the night, they will have access to the staff member's sleeping area.
- For all council-run camp locations, some parts are ADA accessible, but not all parts are. Every camp has rustic locations on site. Our camp team is happy to discuss particulars for a specific camp location.
- Camp is often a busy and loud place. At times, it may be overwhelming for campers who are neurodivergent or have sensory issues. We will gladly talk through what to expect with you and your camper and can discuss accommodations to set them up for success.
- Dietary needs can be accommodated with advance notice. Be sure to include camper dietary restrictions and needs in your camper's required CampDoc paperwork and contact the camp director with any questions or concerns.

Camper Success

We want everyone to be successful, and we find that campers have the best experience if they can do the following:

- Be fully independent with personal hygiene (with reminders from staff)
- *Use the bathroom, shower, and get dressed unassisted
- *Live, shower, and dress in communal spaces. Privacy is an essential and fundamental right of everyone at camp, including in toilets, changing areas, and showers, which are single occupancy. Typical of most public bathrooms, many single-occupancy bathroom stalls are located in one facility.
- *Sleep in a room/tent/small cabin with other people and/or fall asleep without assistance. Our sleeping accommodations will hold multiple people; there is no situation in which a child will have their own room.
- Understand and follow verbal directions
- Understand and follow camp rules and expectations
- Be able to verbalize if they need assistance, are hungry, are hurt, etc.
- Be able to reasonably and age-appropriately self-regulate social and emotional needs

** These skills are targeted for overnight camp experiences.*

Physical Needs Campers should be willing to live and play in an indoor and outdoor camp setting, which includes rustic facilities, wildlife, insects, navigating uneven terrain, and daily exposure to sun, rain, and other weather conditions.

If your camper has physical restrictions and/or uses a wheelchair, crutches, braces, or similar assistive technology, please contact us so we can plan the best possible experience for them. While many programs can be modified to meet the specific needs of our campers, we are not equipped or staffed to provide care for campers who need one-on-one assistance. Activities such as high challenge, canoeing, kayaking, horseback riding, and similar activities can be difficult to access for those with mobility challenges and have limited adaptations depending on the challenges faced.

Activity Restrictions To balance the demand for challenging activities and the safety and well-being of campers and staff we offer the following programs and activities at Camp Butternut Springs*, with restrictions as listed below:

HIGH ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

Several activities with our off-site vendors use specialized equipment. This equipment is designed with the safety of the participant in mind and has manufacturer-recommended limitations to minimize the risk of injury to the participant. To ensure all participants can use equipment safely, the following limits must be strictly enforced:

- Minimum weight: 40 lbs.
- Maximum weight: 275 lbs.
- Maximum height: 6 feet 6 inches.
- Must be able to reach a minimum of 66 inches with both feet on the ground.

In addition to these requirements, supplied harnesses and other equipment must fit properly and securely. Fit will be evaluated by trained instructors.

AQUATIC ACTIVITIES

All participants using watercrafts on-site (including canoes and rowboats) and off-site (including paddleboards and tubes) during council-sponsored programming are required to wear Coast Guard-approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) at all times. Usage of watercraft is dependent on proper fit of supplied PFDs and will be evaluated by trained facilitators.

**Restrictions may differ between GCNWI camps due to different vendor requirements.*

Kulture City Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana is excited to share that we are now certified as a 'Sensory Inclusive' organization by Kulture City, a leading nonprofit dedicated to accessibility and inclusion for individuals with sensory and invisible disabilities. This partnership helps make all of the programs and events hosted by Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana sensory inclusive.

Program & Activity Information

Program Activities Our camp program is balanced with traditional camp activities, theme-based activities, and camper-planned activities; all are facilitated with progression and intentional skill-building. Campers participate in most activities with their program group, but there are also multiple all-camp activities that bring the whole camp together to have fun.

On the first day of their session, campers will work with their staff and the rest of their group to plan the schedule for the week. Campers will have the opportunity to vote on camp activities and suggest additional activities for their group to participate in throughout the week.

Most activities take place outdoors in the open air whenever possible. More information about weather accommodations can be found on page 18.

Girl Scout Badges & patches During their time at camp, campers may participate in activities that can be applied toward earning Girl Scout badges and Journeys. At the end of their session, campers will be sent home with a badge card that lists what badges they have earned or badge steps they have completed. At minimum, all campers will earn the below badge based on the age level of their program:

- Daisy: Buddy Camper
- Brownie: Outdoor Adventurer
- Junior: Camper
- Cadette: Archery

Badges are not provided by camp and must be purchased separately from the [Girl Scout Shop](#).

All campers, regardless of age level, will get a 2025 summer camp fun patch and Camp Butternut Springs rocker at the end of their session.

All campers who complete Program Aide training will get their PA pin and all campers who complete Counselor-in-Training will get their CIT pin at the end of their session. These pins are provided by camp.

Swimming Campers can participate in free swim at least every other day while at camp. Certified lifeguards and trained watchers are on duty at the swimming pool during all aquatic activities.

All campers participate in a “swim check” during their first swim time to demonstrate their swimming ability and comfort level in the water. During the swim check, campers will swim approximately 50 yards using the stroke of their choice; depending on the swimming ability they exhibit, they may be asked to tread water for 1 minutes.

Campers are then given a color-coded swim cap which designates how far out into the swim area they are allowed to go. Campers must wear their swim cap at all times while swimming and can only swim in areas of the water that match their skill level; this allows the aquatics staff to better manage and ensure safety for all campers in the water.

Swim caps contain latex. If your camper has a latex allergy, please make sure to indicate this on their CampDoc paperwork, so we can provide them with a reasonable latex-free substitute.

A Sample Day at of
Overnight Camp

This is an example of what a day at overnight camp might look like:

7:00 a.m.

Time to wake up and get your day started!

7:45 a.m.

Flag Ceremony; this is a Girl Scout tradition that takes place every morning and evening. Program groups take turns working together to raise and lower the flag.

8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.

Breakfast. Most meals are eaten in the dining hall unless you are off-site on a trip or cooking out in your unit over the campfire.

9:00 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

Activity time! On Sunday, counselors help campers plan their week. Activities range from 15 minutes to 2 hours and can include games, art projects, archery, swimming, canoeing, nature exploration, and more!

12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

Lunch

1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Kapers & Turtle Time; Kapers are small tasks assigned to program groups to help keep camp and living units clean. Turtle time is a mid-day siesta to give everyone a chance to take a small break.

2:00-4:00

Activity Time

4:00-6:30

Dinner Cookout

See page 13 for more information about cookouts.

6:45

Flag Ceremony

7:00-9:00

All Camp Activity; a time for the whole camp to gather for one huge and thrilling activity, such as a counselor hunt, camp carnival, and more!

8:30-10:00

Nighttime Activities & Bedtime; lights out is 9:00 for younger campers and 10:00 for older campers.

Sleeping Accommodations Campers of the same age group live together in “units.” Most program groups at Butternut Springs sleep in platform lodges or small cabins; the anticipated sleeping accommodation for each program is listed next to the session dates in the Summer Camp Guide.



Lodges sleep up to 36 people on cots or bunk beds. Staff will sleep in their own adjoining room or nearby in the same room.



Small cabins sleep up to 6 people on cots or bunk beds. Staff will sleep in their own small cabin, centrally located within the unit.

All living units have their own nearby restroom, with flush toilets and running water.

Boating All campers will have the opportunity to go boating at least once during their time at camp. Daisies and Brownies will go row boating while Juniors and older will go canoeing. Campers in aquatic-themed programs will have additional opportunities at the pond.

Anderson Pond sits entirely on Camp Butternut Springs property so our campers will be the only people using it.

Showers All programs will have a shower time scheduled each day, but it will be camper choice to take a daily shower. All campers will, at minimum, be strongly encouraged to rinse off after swimming.

If your camper prefers baths at home, we encourage you to have them practice showering independently before attending camp.

Meals Each full day at camp includes three meals and two snacks. Ample, well-balanced meals with vegetables, fruit, and protein are served at camp; exact menus vary every day of a session. Campers will eat in the dining hall for most meals during their session except for cookouts and off-site trips.

Please do not send food with your camper unless pre-arranged with the camp director. All food found in luggage or mail will be collected by camp staff and returned at the end of the session. Food in living quarters attracts unwelcome animals and bugs.

Cookouts At least once per week, all campers will cookout over the campfire with staff supervision and assistance. Campers in programs with overnight off-site trips will cook out multiple times.

Kapers Kapers are a Girl Scout tradition that help build responsibility and teamwork skills, while caring for their environment and camp. Kapers at camp are done as a group with staff assistance and are composed of unit and all-camp tasks and are done in accordance with appropriate health and safety procedures, depending on the task.

Unit kapers include tidying up sleeping areas, helping clean bathrooms, gathering firewood, and picking up litter.

All-camp kapers rotate between all program groups at camp and include leading flag ceremonies, tidying up around camp, helping clean bathrooms and the shower house, picking up littler, and being meal hoppers (helping to set tables at mealtimes, leading the camp in a thank you before eating, and helping to sweep after meals).

Summer Camp Recruiter Summer Camp Recruiter: Do you love Girl Scout camp? Tell your friends and you can earn a special recruiter patch!

In order to earn the recruiter patch, you must recruit a camper is who NEW to GCNWI summer camp. Friends do not need to attend camp together and do not need to be the same age. Friends that are recruited must not have attended Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana day or overnight camps previously.

Fill out [this form](#) and tell us who you recruited. You will receive the patch when you attend camp this summer.

Summer Camp Milestones	Summer Camp Milestones: Have you attended GCNWI summer camps for 5 years? What about 10? We want to celebrate your milestone with a special patch! Please let us know by answering the 5- and 10-year camper question during registration. If you missed answering this question while registering, please contact your camp director.
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To be eligible, campers must have attended a minimum of 1 summer camp session every year for 5 years to earn the 5-year patch and for 10 years to earn the 10-year patch. Years do not need to be consecutive but they do need to be at a current or former GCNWI property (Butternut Springs, Greene Wood, Juniper Knoll, Palos, and/or Pokanoka).

Trading Post	Camp operates a small store where campers have the option to purchase a limited selection of small items such as postcards, pens, fun patches, stuffed animals, and camp apparel. Campers visit the trading post at least once during their session. There are no snacks or drinks for sale.
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Money can be dropped off for your camper during check-in; it will be kept locked in the camp office when not at the trading post so that it does not get lost. Remaining money not spent will be returned at the end of your camper's session.

Items in the training post range from \$1 up to \$40, with most items costing less than \$10. \$5-\$20 is the average range of money families typically leave their camper for a week at camp; cash is preferred due to technology limitations at camp. If you have any questions about the trading post, please contact our retail team at ShopGS@girlscoutsgcnwi.org.

Camper Kits are also available to order in advance online and will be delivered right to your camper at the beginning of their camp session.

Off-Site Trips	Programs marked with a map icon in the Summer Camp Guide will travel off site as part of their program.
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Depending on the trip, some programs will have a specialty packing list of items to bring in addition to the standard packing list. These specialty packing lists can be found beginning on page 28 and are listed by program name. If your camper's program is not listed, there is not a specialty packing list.

Some off-site activities will require a parent/guardian-signed waiver. Waivers will be sent to you via email two weeks prior to the program start date; blank waivers will also be available at check-in.

Camper Mail Campers love receiving mail! Mail can be sent through the postal service to the camp address or dropped off during check-in. **Please label all mail with your camper's first and last name, program name, program dates, and the day you would like them to receive it (if dropping off at check-in).**

The US Postal Service make daily deliveries to camp. If you are mailing anything to your camper, we recommend doing so in advance to ensure it arrives while they are at camp. Letters that arrive after your camper has gone home will be returned to sender as long as the return address is included on the envelope.

Mail is delivered to campers daily, except on the day they arrive at camp.

Please limit mail to postcards, letters, and small packages. Care packages can sometimes lead to group conflict or negatively impact other campers. We appreciate if package size and contents can be kept modest or can be shared with the entire program group. As an alternative to mailing a care package or gift, you can hide it in their luggage while packing for camp with instructions on when to open it.

Please do not send campers any food or gum as these items can attract unwelcome animals and bugs.

Camper Cell Phones & Smart Watches

Campers staying at camp for a week or longer program have the option to check in a cell phone or smart watch to use at camp during the weekly designated phone time. There is no cell phone time during 3-day sessions and campers in those programs do not have the option to bring a cell phone or smart watch.

Campers who choose to bring a phone to camp will have the opportunity to call home on Wednesday afternoon. Cell phone time typically happens around lunch time but may vary depending on program activities. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated to you at check-in so you will best know when to expect your camper's call.

While we encourage campers to call parents/guardians, it is their choice whether or not to call.

Please note that camp is located in a rural area. **We cannot guarantee cell phone service nor verify service availability. The camp phone is for emergency and business use only. If no phone or smart watch is checked in or the checked in phone or smart watch does not work at camp, we are unable to provide campers access to the camp phone.**

Devices will be left off and stored in the camp office. Please note that GSGCNWI is not responsible for damage to phones or smart watches. Electricity for phone chargers and Wi-Fi connections are not available. Campers with phones or smart watches cannot share with other campers unless noted by a parent/guardian at check-in.

Please assist us in honoring our values and procedures by not giving your camper a cell phone or smart watch to keep with them in their luggage. We will contact you if your camper is having a difficult time adjusting to camp life.

Based on our experiences, even campers who are having a great time often become homesick while speaking to someone at home. It is nature to miss home, and our staff are prepared to support your camper during their session. **We ask for your support in encouraging your camper to focus on the fun of camp and to reach out to their counselor other staff if they still do not feel better by the end of the day. Focusing on other successful overnight experiences or how much you believe in them helps too!**

Note: Smart watches without a data plan are acceptable at camp and not need to be checked in, but campers will not have a place to charge them.

Health & Safety

Weather Programs are held rain or shine! Schedules remain flexible to adapt to weather changes so that campers are safely participating in fun and challenging activities. Help your camper have a successful time at camp by checking and preparing for the weather prior to arrival.

Camp staff constantly monitor weather radios and alerts from the National Weather Service. There are designated indoor storm shelters in cases of severe weather. If severe weather develops during the camp day, campers will be moved to shelter until the weather situation passes. At night, campers will be moved to an indoor sleeping location for the night.

Please do not call camp regarding weather updates. Staff will be busy attending to the safety of the campers and the phone line must remain open in case emergency services need to be contacted. You will be notified of any emergencies involving your camper.

Check-in Health Screening Upon arriving at camp, campers will complete a health screening that ensures they are healthy to attend camp.

During this health check, camp staff will ask health screening questions, take the camper's temperature, and check heads for lice or nits (campers may be asked to undo their hair or remove hats or bandanas for this check).

If lice/nits are found, parents/guardians will be responsible for taking their camper home to be treated before they can return to camp. Though often a hassle, lice can happen; talk with the camp director to determine return options for your camper.

Sick Policy Maintaining a safe and healthy environment for our campers and staff is very important to us. If your child is sick and/or could possibly be contagious, please do not send them to camp, instead email or call your Camp Director to note your camper's absence.

Camp Health Center The camp health center is equipped to handle common camper illnesses and minor injuries. If a camper gets hurt or shows signs of illness, they will be taken to the health center for evaluation by the health supervisor.

(continued on next page)

Camp Health Center
(continued)

Though we will not call home for every scrape or stomachache, we will notify parents/guardians by phone if any of the following occur and will work with you to determine the best care for your camper:

- Any illness or injury that interferes with a camper's participation in the program or requires the camper to spend the night in the health center
- Any vomiting or allergic reactions
- Any illness or injury requiring outside medical attention, including COVID symptoms

Homesickness

It is not uncommon for campers to experience some homesickness while away at camp. Homesickness typically resolves within the first two days at camp as campers adjust to the new people, environment, and routine. Camp staff are trained to work through this with your camper. When sending mail or speaking with your camper, we recommend keeping things as upbeat as possible and avoiding phrases such as "the dog refuses to eat since you left."

The first night at camp is always the most difficult. Many times, letters written home at this point are not full of the fun things they are doing at camp. **Please consider the amount of time a letter has taken to reach you; your camper has often adjusted to camp life by the time you receive such a letter in the mail.** The camp director is available to check on your camper and update you on their experience and how they're doing at any time.

We encourage families to reassure their camper that they will be successful during their camp experience and that you look forward to seeing them on closing day. If your camper struggles to adjust to camp life, the camp director will contact you.

Campers who go home early are not eligible for a refund of any portion of the camp fee.

Dietary Needs

Please let us know of any allergies and dietary restrictions before coming to camp. This information should be noted on the camper's CampDoc paperwork.

We can accommodate a variety of dietary needs and allergies. We provide similar substitutes to meet the needs of each camper, while providing a balanced and complete meal, safe from cross-contamination. We are happy to talk with you about your camper's specific dietary needs and how to ensure your camper has a successful camp stay.

Bug Spray & Sunscreen In the case of missing or depleted sunscreen, staff will provide sunscreen with a minimum of SPF30. When necessary, staff members may assist with applying bug spray or rely on the buddy system to see the needs of the camper. Please be sure to provide your camper with your desired brand and strength. In the case of missing or depleted bug spray, staff will provide bug spray with a minimum of 10% DEET.

If your camper is allergic to a particular sunscreen or bug spray (or a specific ingredient in either), please let us know ahead of time so that we can help your camper avoid the allergen. Please specify this information in the Medications & Allergies section of your camper's paperwork, including the alternative brand and strength of sunscreen or bug spray preferred.

Camper Paperwork & CampDoc **Camper Paperwork is due May 1, 2025.** Overnight camp paperwork consists of a variety of forms that must be completed for your camper to attend camp and participate in activities. Paperwork is completed online using the CampDoc platform.

Within three weeks of registering for camp, you will receive an email from a **campdoc.com** email address with a link to your camper's electronic paperwork. If you do not see an email from CampDoc, make sure to check your spam/junk folders. If you need any assistance accessing your CampDoc account, please contact us at customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org.

We recommend having the following resources available to you when completing your camper's paperwork:

- Current health exam/physical
- Doctor & dentist contact information
- Immunization records with dates
- Dietary restrictions
- Allergy information

Paperwork does not need to be completed in one sitting and can be edited at any time before the May 1 paperwork submission deadline, when the forms will be locked for staff review.

*Health standards require a current health exam/physical that is from within 24 months of the camper's last day at camp and is signed by a doctor. We will also accept copies of school/sports physicals and physicals provided by doctor's offices as long as they meet the date requirements.

(continued on next page)

Camper Paperwork &
CampDoc
(continued)

No camper will be allowed to stay at camp without a signed and completed health physical form. Health exam/physical forms can be uploaded directly to your camper's paperwork or emailed after May 1 to camper@girlscoutsgcnwi.org. Please make sure to include the camper's name, camp location, and program name in the subject line of the email. We are unable to return any hard copies of health forms turned in at check-in.

**This requirement is for overnight camp only.*

If your camper is taking any prescription or over-the-counter medication or supplements (i.e. vitamins, melatonin, etc.), these should be listed in the medications portion of their paperwork. **Per state laws and health codes, all medications sent to camp must be in the original labelled container; any non-prescription medications must have the camper's name legibly written on the container in permanent marker.** This medication will be collected during camper check-in and stored in the health center to be dispensed by the health supervisor as needed; it will be returned at the end of camp.

The over-the-counter medication section of the paperwork must be completed for all campers and signed by a parent/guardian. Our health centers are stock with a supply of common over-the-counter medications, as authorized by a physician, to treat simple complaints such as bug bites, headaches, mild upset stomachaches, menstrual cramps, etc. Any medications listed in this section are kept in stock in the health center and you do not need to send them to camp with your camper. You are also able to indicate in this section if you do not want us to give your child any over-the-counter medication.

Please assist us in honoring our procedures and keeping our campers safe by not giving your camper any medication to keep with them in their luggage. If a camper is found with any medication, it will be collected and stored in the health center. A call will be made home to notify the parents and confirm dosage if it is a medication the camper needs while at camp.

General Information

Communication from Camp	<p>Emails with important camp information will come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Girl Scouts GCNWI Customer Support, customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org or (855) 456-8347• CampDoc, @campdoc.com• Camp Director: Shannon “Disappearing Turtle” Ross, sross@girlscoutsgcnwi.org• Assistant Director: Audrey “Clover” Clinkert, aclinkert@girlscoutsgcnwi.org <p>Make sure to check your email (including junk/spam folders) for any additional important information before coming to camp!</p>
Contact Information	<p>Questions? Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Camp Director Shannon “Disappearing Turtle” Ross, sross@girlscoutsgcnwi.org• Assistant Camp Director Audrey “Clover” Clinkert, aclinkert@girlscoutsgcnwi.org• Customer Support, customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org or (855) 456-8347 <p>After June 2, the summer camp phone number (708) 553-2227 will go live. Before June 2, contact Customer Support or the camp director.</p>
Buddy Requests	<p>Campers can attend camp with a buddy. During registration families will have the opportunity to add a buddy request; please contact Customer Support or the camp director if you need to add a buddy request after completing your registration.</p> <p>Campers may request one buddy. Buddies must request each other and be in the same program, for the same dates, at the same camp location. Groups, troops, and multiple buddy requests are not guaranteed for summer camp programs.</p> <p>All participants in the same program will be sharing the same living unit at camp and will be bunking near each other if they are not in the same lodge.</p>
Girl Scout Membership	<p>Girl Scout membership is required to participate in camp. If your camper is not currently registered, a \$25 membership fee can be added when registering for camp. This fee includes basic accident insurance coverage for all registered Girl Scouts as a supplement to existing insurance coverage. For more information about becoming a Girl Scout visit www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/join</p>

Behavior Issues	All campers and their caregivers are asked to review and commit to a behavior and expectations agreement found in the CampDoc paperwork. If a camper is struggling, camp staff will work with the camper and the family to try to help the camper succeed in the camp setting, but our staff are only equipped to support up to a certain extent. If a camper poses a safety risk to themselves or other campers on site, the caregiver will be called and asked to pick up their camper. There will be no refund for early dismissal.
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Photos & Video	When filling out your camper paperwork, you have given the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana permission to take photos and/or videos of your camper(s) while they are at camp.
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These photos or videos may be used for future promotional materials.

Camp will post photos and videos on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), and Bunk1 throughout the week. Bunk1 is an accessible parent portal where families can stay in touch with what is happening at camp via mobile app or online. It is private to only Butternut Springs families where you can send digital camper mail, view shared photos and videos, and get real-time updates as they are posted by camp administrators. More information on how to access Bunk1 will be shared after registering for camp.

If you do not want Girl Scouts GCNWI to take and use photos and videos of your camper(s), send an email indicating this at least one week out from your camp program to sross@girlscoutsgcnwi.org or send a written note on the first day of camp.

Camp Staff	Our summer staff are composed of carefully selected and screened adults, who display a commitment to working with children and a love for the outdoors. Background checks and reference checks are completed for all staff members. All staff members complete pre-camp training that includes First Aid, CPR, child development, Girl Scout programming, and much more.
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Each staff member chooses a “camp name.” These are nicknames that allow staff to create memorable relationships with campers distinguished from that of their teacher, other authority figure, or even yourself. It also keeps us from having multiple staff members with the same name and adds to the magic of Girl Scout camp.

Item Drop-Off Forgotten items may be dropped off in the first parking lot.
Forgotten items may also be mailed to your camper.

When you arrive, please do not walk in or around camp. When you arrive, park in the first parking lot (the same parking lot as the dumpsters) and call the camp phone number at (708) 553-2227. Someone will come collect the items from you. Make sure all items are labeled with camper's first and last name.

In some situations, camp will have a supply of items in stock that we can give to your camper to ensure they have what they need for their time at camp (i.e. toothpaste, bug spray, sunscreen).

Lost & Found Help us keep track of your campers' belongings by labeling all personal items with their first and last names. Camp staff will do their best to reunite owners with their belongings daily.

When you pick your camper up at the end of the session, you will be able to view any lost and found items. Unclaimed lost and found items will be brought to GSGCNWI Gathering Places at the end of the camp season and held until October 1. Contact the camp director to arrange for item pick up from a Gathering Place.

Financial Information

Camp Fee Payments Overnight camp registration fees cover a wide variety of weekly camp activities including program supplies, meals, lodging, off-site trips (program-specific), and supervision from trained and caring adult staff.

At registration, there are two options to pay for summer camp:

1. Pay camp fees in full at time of registration, including non-refundable deposit.
2. Pay the non-refundable deposit at time of registration and pay the remainder on a payment plan.

*The non-refundable deposit is \$100 for 3- and 6-day programs and \$150 for two-week programs.

Payment plan participation requires you to save a debit/credit card to your secure account during registration.

Payment(s) towards a payment plan can be made at any time after registration by accessing your program registration account and selecting "Pay on Account." These payments can be made with a card other than the one on file on your account.

Any remaining balance on a payment plan will be automatically charged to the debit/credit card on file on the account on June 1, 2025.

Financial Assistance Any Girl Scout who is a registered member of Girl Scouts GCNWI is eligible to receive financial assistance for **one** day or overnight camp program per year. Girl Scouts GCNWI makes funds available for participants whose caregivers could otherwise not afford the cost of camp. Assistance is distributed based on available funds. Questions about financial assistance can be sent to customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org.

How to Receive Financial Aid:

1. Register for summer camp and only pay the deposit. *Camp registration must be completed prior to applying for financial aid.*
2. Complete the Girl Scout Financial Assistance Application which is available at www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/financial-assistance#camp
 - This application will go live on February 1 at 6:00 a.m.
3. Approved financial assistance will be deducted from the total owed for the summer camp program.

If payment of deposit or other factors pose a barrier, please contact customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org as soon as possible.

Using Cookie Dough & Nutty Bucks	Individuals can pay for their camp registration with the rewards they earn through the Girl Scout Cookie Program as well as the Fall Product Program. If you would like to use your earned finances to pay for part, or all, of your summer camp registration, please contact customer care at customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org . Because camp space is limited, we highly recommend not waiting for Cookie Dough or Nutty Bucks to process before registering for a camp program. When registering, we encourage you to pay the deposit instead of paying in full to more easily apply Cookie Dough or Nutty Bucks funds later.
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Cancellations & Refunds	All camp programs are subject to cancellation or rescheduling by GSGCNWI. If a camp program is cancelled by GSGCNWI, and the camper is unable to attend an alternate session, all fees will be refunded, including any deposit made. If a program is cancelled, notification will be sent by email or phone.
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Camp program cancellations received at least 14 days prior to the program start date are eligible for a refund, minus the non-refundable deposit. Refunds will be issued to the same credit or debit card they were paid with.

Cancellations due to medical reasons less than 14 days prior to the program start date are eligible for refund, minus the non-refundable deposit. Requests for cancellation due to medical reasons must be made by August 31, 2025 and include a doctor's note. Cancellation requests due to COVID-19 may provide dated proof of positive test in lieu of doctor's note.

Refund requests must be submitted in writing. Please email customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org with the subject line: Attn: Summer Camp Refund.

Refunds will not be made for the following:

- No shows, late arrival, early departure, or partial program attendance.
 - Cancellation requests less than 14 days prior to the program start date.
 - Campers who violate camp policies and are sent home.
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Overnight Camp Packing List

Quantities are recommended below; pack what makes the most sense for your camper based on length of stay and anticipated weather forecast for their time at camp.

- ☐ Warm sleeping bag or bed roll
- ☐ Pillow
- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ T-Shirts: 1 per day, plus 1 extra
- ☐ Shorts: 1 per day, plus 1 extra
- ☐ Jeans, pants or sweatpants: 1-2 pairs
- ☐ Socks: 1 per day, plus 1 extra
- ☐ Underwear & Bras: 1 per day, plus 1 extra (sports bras recommended)
- ☐ Pajamas: 2+ sets
- ☐ Sweater/Sweatshirt/Jacket
- ☐ Bandana, bucket hat, or baseball hat
- ☐ Rain suit, raincoat, or poncho
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Towels: 2-3
- ☐ Gym shoes, rain boots, or hiking boots: 2 pairs (**please do not send crocs for use outside of showering**)
- ☐ Mess kit (unbreakable plate, cup, bowl, & utensils in a dunk bag)
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ☐ Reusable water bottle
- ☐ Comb/brush and hair ties or other hair accessories
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Shampoo, conditioner, and soap
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Personal sanitary supplies
- ☐ Eyewear supplies (glasses, glasses care, and/or contacts)
- ☐ Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- ☐ Bug spray
- ☐ Small pouch to carry toiletries

Optional Items:

- ☐ Laundry bag
- ☐ Bed sheets
- ☐ Washcloth
- ☐ Personal hand sanitizer
- ☐ Masks: 1-2 per day
- ☐ Inexpensive camera
- ☐ Paper, pen/pencil, envelopes, and stamps
- ☐ Shower shoes (i.e. flip flops)
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Book to read

Please do not bring:

- X Electrical appliances (including but not limited to hair dryers, personal music devices, computers, gaming devices, etc.)
- X Umbrellas
- X Glass bottles or containers
- X Short shorts
- X Snack food (including candy or gum)
- X Hidden cell phones and/or smart watches
- X Crop tops
- X tank tops with spaghetti straps, halters,
- X Crocs for use outside of the shower
- X Sandals
- X Alcohol, drugs, or weapons

Packing List Details

Packing Tips Please try to limit your camper to three pieces of baggage: a sleeping bag with pillow, suitcase or duffel bag, and a backpack to carry around camp each day.

Be sure to label your camper's belongings with their name. Luggage tags for baggage will be provided at check-in.

Be sure to pack enough clothes to last the entire program session.

Have your camper help pack for camp, including rolling their sleeping bag, so they are familiar with what they have with them and will know how to pack up at the end of their session.

What to wear Camp life involves a lot of hiking, wooded areas, dirt, and outdoor time. Campers should wear casual clothing that can get dirty. Campers will frequently use art supplies and play outdoors; we recommend clothes you won't mind getting stained.

Socks and sturdy, close-toed shoes should be worn to protect feet on trails and gravel roads at camp.

Clothing is there to protect campers from the environment, such as the sun, bugs, and sticks/uneven walking surfaces. **Short shorts, tank tops with spaghetti straps, halters, crop tops, sandals, crocs, and other open-toe shoes should not be worn at camp.**

Backpack Campers will carry the Fab 5 with them every day: sunscreen, bug spray, flashlight, raincoat/poncho, and water bottle.

Campers also carry items to and from swim and shower times. We recommend using a regular backpack instead of a drawstring bag.

Water Bottle Water bottles should be reusable—Girl Scouts stay green! Please bring the water bottle filled to camp. The water at camp is well water and may taste different than at home, but it is all potable and safe to drink.

Specialty Program Packing Lists

All specialty program packing list items are in addition to the packing list above. If your camper's program is not listed below, there are no additional items needed.

Programs indicated with an asterisk (*) have an additional waiver(s) that will be emailed to you two weeks prior to the program start date.

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- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Dream it, Dune it! | <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 1 additional swimsuit |
| To the Dunes or Bust | <input type="checkbox"/> | At least 1 additional towel |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hiking boots |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | A small duffel bag for off-site overnight trip |
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|------------|--------------------------|--|
| In Motion* | <input type="checkbox"/> | Long pants/jeans for riding |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sturdy shoes/rubber boots (preferably with a heel) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Longer shorts or leggings for climbing activities (aka shorts that will not ride up under a harness) |
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- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| CIT Internship | <input type="checkbox"/> | Your CIT I Binder |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
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- | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|
| CIT Mastery | <input type="checkbox"/> | Your CIT I Binder |
| | | *Varies by program area and week; please see specialty packing lists for programs below based on the interest you indicated when registering |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Week of June 22-27: |
| | | o <i>Art</i> : Art Explorer, Artistic Crafter |
| | | o <i>High Adventure</i> : Epic Elevation |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Week of July 20-25: |
| | | o <i>High Adventure</i> : Epic Elevation, In Motion |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Week of July 27-August 1: |
| | | o <i>Aquatics and front country skills</i> : Dream It, Dune It, To the Dunes or Bust |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Art</i> : Art Explorer, Artistic Crafter |
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Day Camp Experience (July 28-August 1)

Overview This is year we are introducing a day camp experience at Butternut Springs. We hope to engage campers who are not yet ready for an overnight camp with a day only experience designed to help build an interest in overnight camp.

Our camp program is balanced with traditional camp activities, theme-based activities, and camper-planned activities; all are facilitated with progression and intentional skill-building. Campers participate in activities with their program group. Lunch is served in the dining hall unless it's cookout day.

Inclusions, Access, & Accommodations See complete information on Inclusions, Access, & Accommodations on page 5.

Camper Success See complete information on camper success on page 6.

Program Activities See complete information on program activities on page 9.

Girl Scout Badges & Patches See complete information on Girl Scout badges & patches on page 10.

Sample Day **8:40 a.m.-9:00 a.m.**
Check-in
9:15 a.m.-12 p.m.
Activity Time! Activities can range from 15 minutes to 2 hours and can include games, art projects, archery, swimming, nature exploration, and more!
12:00 p.m.
Lunch
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
More camp activities!
3:00 p.m.
Check-out

Swimming See the complete swimming information on page 11.

Cookouts See the complete cookout information on page 14.

Kapers See the complete Kapers information on page 14.

Trading Post See complete trading post information on page 15.

Weather	See complete weather information on page 18.
Sick Policy	Maintaining a safe and healthy environment for our campers and staff is very important to us. If your child is sick and/or could possibly be contagious, please do not send them to camp, instead email or call your Camp Director to note your camper's absence.
Camp Health Center	See complete health center information on page 18.
Medications	<p>If your camper is taking any prescription or over-the-counter medication or supplements (i.e. vitamins, melatonin, etc.), these should be listed in the medications portion of their paperwork. Per state laws and health codes, all medications sent to camp must be in the original labelled container; any non-prescription medications must have the camper's name legibly written on the container in permanent marker. We will collect this container and store it in the health center for the week.</p> <p>Please provide the necessary amounts of doses for your child to take while at camp.</p>
Dietary Needs	See complete dietary needs information on page 19.
Bug Spray & Sunscreen	See complete Bug spray and sunscreen information on page 20.
Camper Paperwork & CampDoc	See complete Camper Paperwork & CampDoc information on page 20.
Photos & Videos	See complete Photos and Videos information on page 23.

Camp Fee Payments	Day camp registration fees cover a wide variety of weekly camp activities including program supplies, lunch, etc., all supervised by trained and caring adult staff. Before and after care can be added for an additional fee.
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At registration, there are two options to pay for summer camp:

1. Pay camp fees in full at time of registration, including \$50 non-refundable deposit for day camp programs.
2. Pay only the \$50 non-refundable deposit at time of registration and pay the remainder on a payment plan.

Payment plan participation requires you to securely save a debit/credit card to your account during registration.

Payment(s) toward a payment plan can be made at any time after registration by accessing your program registration account and selecting "Pay on Account." These payments can be made with a card other than the one on file on your account.

Any remaining balance on a payment plan will be automatically charged to the debit/credit card on file on the account on June 1, 2025.

Financial Assistance	See the complete Financial Assistance information on page 25.
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Using Cookie Dough & Nutty Bucks	See the complete Cookie Dough & Nutty Bucks information on page 26.
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Cancellations & Refunds	See the complete Cancellation & Refund policy on page 26.
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Transportation	Transportation to camp is the responsibility of each camper's family.
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Arrival	If you arrive at camp before check-in starts, please enter the camp driveway and make an immediate left to enter the first parking lot. Enter one of the four defined lanes and pull as far forward as you can so that we can minimize the number of vehicles that may be left to wait on the road. The check-in and check-out process will begin in this parking lot.
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Check-In **Check-in starts at 8:40 a.m.** After you arrive at camp and pull into a defined lane and stop. There will be a staff member holding a stop sign, reminding you to go no further. During check-in, all non-campers, including parents/guardians, should remain in the car. Camp staff will come to your car to greet your camper, help them out of the car, and assist them to their unit safely.

Once your camper has been guided by the staff out of the path of other incoming vehicles, you will be give a signal from staff member holding the stop sign. They will turn the sign around to show the word 'slow.' Upon receiving this signal, you may proceed slowly forward and to the right to exit camp.

Please note, the speed limit is 5 mph when on camp property. Drive carefully and attentively as campers and staff may be walking through camp.

Late arrivals & Early Pick up **Please be aware that by arriving late or departing early, campers will unfortunately miss parts of the camp program.**

If you are going to arrive after 9:15 a.m., please the camp phone number at 708-553-2227 to let us know you approximate arrive time.

When you turn into camp, continue down the road to the right, keeping the first parking lot with the dumpsters to your left. Follow the curve in the road to the left and the Property Manager's house will come into view. **DO NOT STOP AT THE HOUSE.** Continue past the house and the maintenance garage. Follow the curve in the road to the right and enter the second parking lot. This is where you can park. Once you have parked, call the camp phone number at 708-553-2227 to let us know you have arrived. A staff member will come out to greet you, collect your camper, and unite them with their program group.

Check-out This process may take longer on the first day. Every effort is made to ensure campers leave as quickly and efficiently as possible. We thank you for your patience as we ensure every camper gets home safely.

Check-out starts at 3 p.m. For a reminder of what to do when you enter camp, see the 'Arrival' section on page 2.

To keep campers safe, we require a photo ID from an adult listed on your camper's Transportation Release form every day. A staff member will come to your car, ask who you are picking up, check your ID, and have you sign the Transportation Release form.

We will have forms printed from your paperwork, so **please make sure your paperwork is complete and includes all approved adults, including yourself.**

Once confirmed, you will be directed to where you will pick up your camper.

**Before-Camp &
After-Camp Care**

Drop-off is between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Pick-up and drop-off for the Before-Camp and After-Camp Program will take place in the second parking lot.

When you turn into camp, continue down the road to the right, keeping the first parking lot with the dumpsters to your left. Follow the curve in the road to the left and the Property Manager's house will come into view. **DO NOT STOP AT THE HOUSE.** Continue past the house and the maintenance garage. Follow the curve in the road to the right and enter the second parking lot. This is where you can park. Once you have parked, call the camp phone number at 708-553-2227 to let us know you have arrived. A staff member will come out to greet you, collect your camper, and unite them with their program group.

Pick-up is between 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. If you arrive before 3:30 p.m., please pick-up in the regular line.

Absences If you need to make a last-minute cancellation, please inform us of your camper's absence by emailing the camp director or calling the camp phone at (708) 553-2227; if you need to leave a message, please include your camper's full name and program.

Closing Ceremony On Friday, day campers will have the opportunity to participate in closing ceremony.

Check-out begins at 3:00 p.m. with our closing ceremony. Please do not arrive earlier than 2:30 p.m. All family members are invited to attend the closing ceremony but **please leave pets at home.**

If you are unable to pick up your camper at the 3:00 p.m. check out time, please see the section below regarding After Care.

Upon arrival at camp, a staff member will check your photo ID and have you sign a release form for your camper(s). **You will keep this form in your possession until it is returned to your camper's counselor in exchange for your camper.**

Closing ceremony begins promptly at 3:00 p.m. with a camper-led flag ceremony. Each program will have the opportunity to share a brief description of their week and sing a camp song for everyone. At the end of closing ceremony, campers will line up behind their counselor. You will need to turn in your signed camper release form to the counselor for your camper to be released to you. Your camper will have any medication(s) and a check-out envelope containing camp patches, badge card, their cell phone (if checked in), and any leftover trading post money.

Camp will remain open until 4:30 p.m. for any camper who would like to show their family around camp.

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- Daily Packing List
- ☐ Backpack
 - ☐ Water bottle (filled)
 - ☐ Insect repellant
 - ☐ Sunscreen
 - ☐ Raincoat or poncho
 - ☐ Hair ties
 - ☐ Bandana or hat
 - ☐ Sit-upon (optional)
 - ☐ Mask (optional)
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What to wear	Camp life involves a lot of hiking, wooded areas, dirt, and outdoor time. Campers should wear casual clothing that can get dirty. Campers will frequently use art supplies and play outdoors; we recommend clothes you won't mind getting stained.
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Socks and sturdy, close-toed shoes should be worn to protect feet on trails and gravel roads at camp.

Clothing is there to protect campers from the environment, such as the sun, bugs, and sticks/uneven walking surfaces. **Short shorts, tank tops with spaghetti straps, halters, crop tops, sandals, crocs, and other open-toe shoes should not be worn at camp.**

Backpack	Campers' belongings will stay with them throughout the day, so send them with a backpack large enough for their things plus any projects they may bring home. We recommend using a regular backpack instead of a drawstring bag.
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Please check your camper's backpack daily for notes, handouts, and camp projects.

Sit-Up on	A Girl Scout tradition! These are portable seats that keep campers dry when sitting on the ground. Bring a small, light-weight option as it will be carried around by the camper throughout the day.
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Campers can make their own by searching "Girl Scout Sit-Up on" online for several easy-to-make options.

Cell Phones & Smart Watches	Optional. If a camper has a cell phone at camp, they will be reminded to keep it off and in their backpack—we want campers to enjoy their time with each other and the camp activities! If a camper has a smart watch, we ask that they do not call or text during the camp day.
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If a phone or smart watch becomes a distraction to programming, it will be collected and locked in the administration building and returned to the camper at the end of the day. You will be contacted by the camp director if there are any additional concerns.
