

Frequently Answered Questions:

Who can come to camp?

Any child within the age range, listed for a given session, can come to camp. Camp Turner does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, or socio-economic status.

Is this a Catholic Camp?

Yes. All participants must attend mass one evening per week with the entire camp. Masses are kid friendly. No one is required to receive communion. Everyone is required to be respectful.

Is there more praying?

Yes. We say a prayer together with the whole camp every morning and every evening before bed. We also say grace before and after each meal.

Will my campers have to learn songs or bible verses?

No. Camp Turner is not a religious education camp. We have no agenda for indoctrination or evangelization. Our staff is trained to teach campers values like honesty, kindness, friendship, sharing, cooperation, teamwork and forgiveness. Especially, we hope to teach campers to appreciate the presence of the divine in themselves, in each other, and in all of creation.

Are campers forced to go to Communion during mass.

No. Campers are directed to not make their First Communion at camp. Mass is stopped for a brief announcement to this effect. Campers who wish to come forward so as not to be conspicuous, may cross their arms and receive a blessing instead of Communion, or remain in their seats while others receive.

How old should my camper be to come to camp?

Most sessions are for campers from 8 – 15 years old. Session A is reserved for younger campers, ages 7 – 13. But there is no specific age at which a child is “ready” to be away for a week.

We recommend the following guidelines:

- Campers should be able to perform their own toileting and hygiene functions without assistance. Staff will not assist with these issues.
- A camper should be able to express personal needs or discomforts or dislikes to staff without hesitation or reservation.
- A camper should be willing to come with an open mind. Forcing children to come to camp is not recommended.
- Parents should avoid “pick up deals” – in which parents promise to pick up children if they don’t like camp. This well intentioned strategy ultimately sets campers up for failure.

Can campers call Home?

Yes. Campers may ask their counselor to take them to the office to use the director’s phone if there is a need. Campers will be asked what the need is, so a counselor may help solve the problem without a need for a phone call. Likewise, the director will try to solve the problem before calling. If a camper cannot or does not wish to express the problem to camp staff, or if a solution cannot be achieved, a call will be placed immediately. The camper will be given 5 minutes to talk to their

parent in private, without monitoring. After this time we hope the parent will explain to the director what the issue is and how camp staff may help.

Can campers bring cell phones to camp?

No. There is rarely cell signal at camp. For a number of other reasons we do not allow cell phones in the cabins. Campers may call home through the office if necessary.

Can my camper come home?

Of course! Camp is not for everyone, although most kids have a blast here. Sometimes it is just best to go home. Sorry, we do not offer refunds.

What do you do about homesickness?

Homesickness is normal. Everyone, including staff, get homesick. It just means that you miss people and places you love and are used to. It is entirely possible to miss people and still have a great time at camp! Homesickness does not normally mean a camper should go home, though sometimes campers need to. When a camper gets homesick, staff are trained to listen and affirm the feelings behind the homesickness. Staff are also trained to help campers find ways to be involved and to find people to connect with while at camp. Staff facilitate the strategy necessary to help with these connections. The very things which cause homesickness – new people, places, activities, food and surroundings, are the very things which make camp a meaningful and growth-full experience.

So, when does homesickness lead to a phone call or trip home?

That is up to the parent. Oftentimes a member of administration will call to discuss the situation without the camper present. Generally, if a camper refuses two meals in a row (without supplemental candy), a significant portion of a day, or is showing signs of sleep deprivation, parents can usually expect a phone call.

Pick-Up Deals

Danger! Many well meaning parents make “pick up” deals with their campers. This is not recommendable. First, it is poor behavior management, leaving control of a major decision up to children instead of the adults involved. Secondly, it sets campers up to fail. Most pick up deals end up in a camper exercising the choice to go home when they otherwise would have not needed to.

What is the Staff to Camper ratio?

Passive activities (sleeping) minimum 1:25, usually 1:10.

In camp activities: 1:10

Hikes: 1:8

Beach or other trips: 1:5

Can my camper bunk with their friend / sibling?

Many parents want to send campers with a friend. (My Mom did). In many cases this is more the need of the parent than the camper. Nevertheless, Camp Turner does facilitate cabin mate requests within these guidelines:

- Campers must be of the same gender.
- Campers must be within 12 months of the same age.
- Requests must come in reciprocal pairs. (Two campers request each other).

- No “chains” will be honored (eg. Sue request Jenny, Jenny request Mary, Mary requests Linda, Linda request Rachel, Rachel requests Heather, who requests Lynn who requests Sue. That makes 7 out of 10 campers in a cabin who are already friends! Who would want to be one of the other three who came alone?)
- No groups of three will be honored.

What about my camper’s medication?

All medication, except emergency inhalers and epi-pens, is collected at check-in and is stored in the Health Center. Please review our Camp Turner Health Form for a list of over-the-counter medications which we stock. You do not need to send these, but you do need your doctor to check off that it is okay for the Camp Nurse to provide them to your child.

Do you have a nurse on site?

Yes. Always.

Can my child choose activities?

Yes. A normal “day” consists of two choice periods and two assigned times before dinner. Of course normal days are rare. We are always trying to change things up to keep them interesting.

How often does my child get to ride horses?

Most campers ride twice per week. Every camper is scheduled to attend each activity, including horses, once per week. In addition to these activity periods, there is one club time and one choice time per day. During “choice time” campers are encouraged to choose something new each day. During this time horses is very popular, and campers may only choose it once per week. (That’s the normal “twice per week). Some campers are trying for a horse award, and therefore go every day during “club time” If a camper does this, they attend horses 5 times in the week and are not allowed to choose horses during “choice time”, thus opening up more riding time for campers not in the awards club. So, most campers, twice, some campers, 5 times. All this is weather permitting.

Does everyone get an award?

Yes, and no. Some campers choose to attend an awards club all week. If they do that, that will get an award, at least for participation or effort. Most will get one for some level of achievement in that area. “Joke” awards are not permitted. Many campers choose to not follow an awards program, and instead choose a variety of recreational clubs during club period. This is perfectly acceptable and a lot of fun, but yields no certificate of achievement. I myself (the Camp Director), never pursued an award program in my eight summers as a camper at Camp Turner, but I still kept coming back.

How competitive is your camp?

You can objectify the “heat” of a hot pepper in scoville units, or the temperature of a room in degrees. I find it difficult to measure competition. At Camp Turner competition per se – victory for myself and the defeat of an opponent - is never our goal. We play basketball and we keep score. We change the rules to help balance teams. We require passing before shooting. Sometimes we add an extra ball, or two. Sometimes we change the height of the baskets. Sometimes we require that everyone gets to shoot. We rotate teams so everyone has a chance on the “winning” squad, and by

the end, no one spent the whole time on the losing side. We encourage team play and cooperation and achievement. Ever play soccer with three teams and three goals? It's a blast! But it is difficult to say who won in the end. And you'd be surprised.....for nearly 90 years.....every CT Olympic games has somehow ended in a tie....so, yeah....there is some competition..... enough to make it fun, hopefully not enough to hurt feelings.

Are campers forced to ride horses or anything else at camp?

In general a camper should always have the right to refuse. I cannot think of anything a camper is actually forced to do. If a camper refuses activities for an entire day, we will generally call home for advice.

What kinds of safety precautions are taken at camp.

I get this question a lot, and it is really hard to answer a question this broad well. Safety is our concern in every area of every activity at camp. The administration does continually – every day - safety tours, writing down things we can improve and make safer. We have a manual nearly 100 pages thick, outlining our policies and safety considerations in every area of camp. Campers and staff are oriented to all the regular hazards of camp within 12 hours of arrival. We require that all campers be supervised at all times. We require that a counselor never be alone with a camper. We require that all programs and activities be written and approved in writing before they are implemented. We require necessary safety equipment in all areas as mandated by the NY State Health Department which inspects us every year. We hire people qualified and where applicable, certified, to teach in the area they are in charge of. The physical and emotional safety of campers and staff is our primary concern at all times. There is risk at camp, as anywhere else. Accidents do happen. People do get hurt. In these cases we document and review what happened so as to plan ways to avoid similar accidents in the future. We are inspected and licensed by the NY State Department of Health. We are also inspected by the NY State Building Inspectors and Code Officials.

Can I visit my camper at camp?

We ask that you not do this. A child may leave if necessary, but visits by loved ones tend to disrupt the camper being visited and others within the cabin.

Can I pick up my camper early?

Campers who need to leave early on departure day may be picked up between 1:15 and 2:00 PM on departure day. We cannot arrange early pick ups after 2 PM on departure day (Fridays).